

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che

Fire This Time!



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CHANGE!
NOT
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**FIRE THIS TIME
IN CARACAS, VENEZUELA
AT THE SAO PAULO FORUM**

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FIGHTING FOR MOTHER NATURE, FIGHTING AGAINST CAPITALISM!

CONFRONTING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

By Alison Bodine

In July 2019 the journal *Science* published a report describing how the planting of billions of acres of trees could be a solution to the climate crisis. According to the study, trees planted on over 2.2 billion acres (about the size of the United States) could remove 205 billion tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere, which would make a significant impact towards limiting global warming.

A media buzz quickly developed around this report, which on the surface presents an elegant and even simple solution. However, even if we accept the science behind the study, there are other important questions that must be asked if we are to understand how a project of this scale might be implemented.

So, before we talk about creating more forests, what about the forests that continue to be destroyed every day? According to National Geographic “Forests still cover about 30 percent of the world’s land area, but they are disappearing at an alarming rate. Between 1990 and 2016, the world lost 502,000 square miles (1.3 million square kilometres) of the forest, according to the World Bank—an area larger than South Africa. Since humans started cutting down forests, 46 percent of trees have been felled, according to a 2015 study in the journal *Nature*. About 17 percent of the Amazonian rainforest has been destroyed over the past 50 years, and losses recently have been on the rise.”



If the destruction of forests is ongoing and even accelerating, how, then can we expect to find the political will to create more?

On top of this, like other climate catastrophes that humanity faces, advanced industrial capitalist governments and big business have known about the devastation that destroying the forests in favour of massive agri-business and natural resource extraction for a long time. This concept was so well known that an entire generation ago, in 1992, a major children’s film “FernGully: The Last Rainforest” was released warning of the disastrous consequences.

Can these same governments and multinational corporations now be convinced to stop their drive for profits from the insatiable destruction of forests?

We must ask these questions not because

we are cynical, but because the scale of the crisis that humanity is facing requires us to do so.

**H u m a n i t y
C a n n o t I n n o v a t e
O u r s e l v e s O u t
o f a C l i m a t e
C a t a s t r o p h e**

In the fall of 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Change (IPCC) released a report on the devastating impacts of not limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Citing over 6,000 sources, the report gave humanity 12 years to drastically reduce carbon emissions or face catastrophic consequences.

In this context, if we answer the above questions honestly, the planting of billions of acres trees is another example that, under the current capitalist economic system which demands economic expansion and increasing profits above all else, humanity cannot innovate ourselves out of the climate crisis. An economic system which drives the destruction of the forests, and all of life on planet earth, is just simply not capable of bringing about the fundamental changes needed to ensure the survival of humanity. Scientists recognize this too. When Damon Matthews, a climate scientist from Concordia University was asked by *Wired Magazine* to comment on the cutting of global carbon emissions he said, “we haven’t even started to talk about what might be ‘possible’ and are still mostly arguing about what is ‘feasible’ without compromising economic growth.” These are of course extremely different things, and the latter will not get us anywhere near the 1.5 degrees C target.”

So, what will keep the planet at the 1.5 degrees Celsius target? In 2012, Evo Morales, the revolutionary President of Bolivia explained that what is needed is

Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver rally & march against Trans Mountain expansion project, September 2018



a fundamental transformation - one that would create the conditions where projects like the planting of billions of acres of trees would be possible. As he said, "Sisters and brothers of the world: Capitalism has created a civilization that is wasteful, consumerist, exclusive, clientelist, a generator of opulence and misery. That is the pattern of life, production and consumption that we urgently need to transform."

We Need a Mass Movement for the Climate

The kind of transformation that we need to undertake in order to ensure the continuity of human life on planet earth requires a mass movement. One that brings together poor, working, and oppressed people that will be the hardest hit when the sea-levels rise, the weather gets more extreme, and drinkable water becomes scarcer. The science is clear, and governments and multinational corporations that have willfully neglected the oncoming catastrophe for decades cannot be relied upon to reverse it today.

Here in British Columbia, this means uniting against the climate-destroying projects that are all putting the interests of profit above those of people: the TMX

Pipeline expansion, the development of Liquid Natural Gas (LNG), the construction of the Site C Dam and the flooding of the Peace River Valley.

Globally, this movement against the climate crisis must be as broad as possible, despite any differences in methods and techniques. Greta Thunberg, a young woman from Sweden that has ignited a worldwide movement of school strikes for the climate has made the call for a Global Climate Strike this September. There will be actions in Vancouver, Canada and around the world to get involved in, to help shape and build, and to send a clear message to the masterminds of the economic system that landed humanity in this crisis in the first place - we, people of mother earth, will no longer accept business as usual.

"You cannot solve the crisis without treating it as a crisis, without seeing the full picture. You cannot leave the responsibility to individuals, politicians, the market or other parts of the world to take. This has to include everything and everyone." Greta Thunberg, speech to the National Assembly in Paris, July 23, 2019.

Follow Alison Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Climate Convergence Fights Back Against TMX

By Alison Bodine

On June 18, 2019 Prime Minister Trudeau issued the re-approval of the disastrous Trans Mountain Pipeline, the day after declaring Canada to be in a "climate emergency." The sheer hypocrisy of this shameful approval, which tramples climate science and Indigenous rights alike, was a call to action for Vancouver's Climate Convergence coalition.

The Mountain Protectors, BROKE (Burnaby Residents Opposing Kinder-Morgan Expansion) and Climate Convergence joined together to call people "Back to Burnaby Mountain," where construction in preparation for the oil pipeline expansion is already underway. On July 5, activists from all walks of life joined together for a tour of the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm and Kwekwecnewtxw - the Watch House. Following the tour, there was a lively discussion about the next steps to

take in voicing peaceful opposition to the re-approved pipeline expansion that is set to cost taxpayers upwards of \$15-\$20 billion.

Also, during the month of July Climate Convergence organizers distributed thousands of fliers and collected petition signatures at Vancouver's largest outdoor Car Free Festival on Commercial Drive, demanding that the Trudeau government cancel the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion (TMX). The great response to the table and petition was a clear sign that people in Vancouver and BC continue to be interested in how they can act against both the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion and the climate crisis!

To find out more about Climate Convergence and to get involved visit www.climateconvergence.ca, @climatewarriors on Facebook, @climate604 on Twitter and @climateconvergence on Instagram.



MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES

Indigenous struggle against colonialism



Kaho'okahi Kanuha (1989-)

Kaho'okahi Kanuha is a 30-year-old leader in the struggle to protect Mauna Kea, an ancestrally, culturally, and spiritually sacred site of the Kanaka Maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians) against the Thirty Meter Telescope project. He was arrested in 2015 for his activism, but found not guilty of obstructing work crews in 2016. He also teaches Hawaiian language and social studies.

"There are two sides, two parties in this issue, who hold kuleana [responsibility], that is us and that is you. We have made our position very clear; we are not compromising on another telescope. We are not giving in and we are not backing down. This is our home and we will do whatever it takes to protect it. Again, to the TMT [Thirty Meter Telescope] board, you have choices. We don't. You have a plan B. We don't. You have another place where you can do what you need to do. We don't have any other place to be Hawaiian. We don't have any other place for our culture to live. This is our plan A and this is the only plan we have. [...] Just because things are legal, does not make them right. I remember a time when slavery was legal. That never made it right. So, you may have the legal right to proceed, but you do not have the permission of the Kanaka who are genealogically connected to this place."

- Kaho'okahi Kanuha, July 27, 2019.

To learn more about the struggle against the TMT project visit: www.puuhuluhulu.com

*Sign the petition: chng.it/LbJfVK8w
#WeAreMaunaKea #TMTshutdown*

By Azza Rojbi

"My father says he will buy me toys and get me a new school bag. But I don't want a new school bag. I hate school bags...I don't want to go anywhere near a bus. I hate buses, I hate school and I can't sleep. I see my friends in my dreams begging me to rescue them. So, from now on, I'm going to stay at home."

Those were the words of eight-year-old Mokhtar al-Jaradi to Al Jazeera news. Mokhtar was one of the survivors of the horrific bombing of a school bus by Saudi fighter jets in Yemen's Saada province in 2018.

August 9, 2019 will mark a year since this horrendous attack by the Saudi-led coalition. What was supposed to be an exciting field trip full of fun and learning for the kids turned into bloodshed when a Saudi airstrike hit their school bus as they stopped by a busy market for snacks and water. According to local authorities, 51 people were killed, including 40 children, and 79 were injured, 56 of them children.

This atrocity committed by the Saudi-led coalition is far from being an isolated incident. As the war in Yemen enters its 5th year, the death toll is approaching 100,000 people, according to data from the U.S.-based research group Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED). The U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition war on Yemen has caused what the United Nations calls "the world's worst humanitarian crisis." Millions have been displaced from their homes. Schools, hospitals, roads and all sorts of vital infrastructure have been destroyed by constant bombing. The UN estimates that over 80% of the population, 24 million Yemenis, are "in immediate need of humanitarian assistance" with over 15 million living on the brink of starvation.



Yemeni children raise signs while participating in a demonstration in Sana'a against the Saudi-led airstrike that killed dozens of school children. August 12, 2018

1 Year After the Massacre of School Children in Yemen by Saudi Arabia: Defending the People of Yemen is Our Human Duty

In addition to the scarcity of food and water, the health care system in Yemen continues to deteriorate, with more than half of Yemen's health facilities closed and a cholera outbreak that has infected more than 1.2 million people since October 2016.

The humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen shows no signs of slowing down. On June 14, 2019, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that "one woman and six newborns die every two hours in Yemen from complications during pregnancy or childbirth".

Imperialists Hands Off Yemen
Saudi Arabia started its war on Yemen with the false pretense of defending legitimacy and stability in Yemen and the region. Fast forward to today, Yemen is far from seeing any sort of stability, the country is engulfed in a humanitarian crisis and there is no hope in sight!

The Saudi-led coalition never had the well-being of the Yemeni people or the stability of the country at heart. Saudi Arabia and its allied Gulf monarchies have been acting as agents of imperialism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The war on Yemen

is another imperialist driven war against an independent government in the MENA region.

The United States and their imperialist allies, aside from Yemen's vast natural resources such as oil and gold, more importantly need the strategic location of Yemen to expand their domination and hegemony which would serve their economic and military interests in MENA. Yemen's coast borders the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a strategic narrow waterway between the Horn of Africa and the Middle East linking the Mediterranean Sea, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea, with the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. According to the CIA World Factbook Bab el-Mandeb Strait is one of the world's most active and strategic shipping lanes. Hiding in plain sight is the largest permanent U.S. military base in Djibouti - just across from Bab el-Mandeb in the Horn of Africa, adding to a strong strategic network of all the U.S. military bases in the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. This gives the U.S. and its imperialist allies perfect leverage against Iran, even though Iran controls the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a tiny important chokepoint waterway between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. With the U.S. dominating Yemen, the process of strategically circling Iran - which began with the 1979 Iranian revolution, and was reinforced from 2001 with the new era of war and occupation - will be complete.

The United States' biggest fear is the formation of an independent state in Yemen chosen by the people of Yemen, governed by Yemenis and not by Washington, London, Paris and Berlin. What imperialists want is a puppet corrupt regime in Yemen like Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE) that will follow their colonial orders, serve their interests and tip the balance of forces in MENA in favour of U.S. and European imperialism.

U.S., Saudi and UAE Stop the War on Yemen

This imperialist war on Yemen is being

Continued on page 30

By Manuel Yepe

When the propaganda of capitalism calls on third-world nations to implement or expand market policies, or to shy away from socialist policies of common benefit, no one knows whether it is a mockery that reflects how much the intelligence of peoples is undervalued or an invitation to become accomplices of the minority segment of the world's population that exploits the majority.

The manipulation of the media by the empire—including on the Internet—has led most of the citizens of the United States, and of the countries within its sphere of influence and control, to call “democracy” a system as undemocratic as the one presided over by Washington, although Wall Street and the military and industrial complex at the Pentagon's axis are in fact ruled by it.

The dictatorship that the United States exerts today on the world with the support of the opulent classes of the other countries of the planet, now goes through moments that denote precariousness.

Extreme poverty, marginality, the lack of

The Effectiveness of CAPITALIST Propaganda

have access to medicines; nearly 900 million do not have drinking water; more than 900 million lack housing or live in precarious housing; 1.6 billion do not have electricity; 2,500 million lack drainage systems or sewers; 770 million adults are illiterate; 18 million die each year from poverty (the majority are children under the age of 5); more than 200 million children and young people between the ages of 5 and 17 work in conditions close to slavery as soldiers, prostitutes, servants or in other dangerous or humiliating tasks.

If capitalism could exhibit a world of progress, freedom and justice, it would be easy to sell the system all over the world and have the Third World accompany it in this crisis. But

for people to understand that a system that generates so much injustice among human beings and is inept at managing their relations with nature is sustainable for much longer. It is not known if humanity has time to repair, for the sake of its survival, the disaster provoked in the environment by the voracity that moves capitalism, a system that cannot be humanized, because its intrinsic nature is inhuman.

Putting social and solidarity ahead of the greed imposed by capitalism—because it needs them to exist—is the only way humanity can save itself on the basis of its most precious aptitude, intelligence, when applied to its survival instinct.

It has already been announced that the next U.S. crisis will be caused by the health gap between rich and poor. This has widened in the last two decades, according to a study by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) that shows a “dramatically alarming” lack of progress in health equity in the last 25 years in the USA. Income inequality is the root cause of health inequality, as the costs of health care and a healthy lifestyle are high. The more than five million people examined make this study meaningful.

The root cause of income inequality has been the result of the extreme monetary policies of central banks, which have fuelled asset price bubbles that only enrich those who own them. With home ownership at 1960s levels, and more than 50% of citizens not owning shares, this research suggests that failed policies have led to the implosion of the middle class.

Written for the daily POR ESTO! of Merida, Mexico.



opportunities for education and decent work, the disintegrating emigration of the family with its sequels of violence and drug addiction, all result from a capitalist system that has been unable to give answers to the pressing problems capitalism has created. The individualistic ethic in which capitalism is rooted is the nourishing mother of all the worst of today's human societies: corruption, the illegal appropriation of things, speculation, banditry, the exploitation of the work of others, the privatization of social spaces and other “beautiful” things.

According to updated data from the United Nations, there are 7.545 billion people on this planet, of which more than 20 million are chronically malnourished; 2 billion do not

with so much horror in its offerings, every day must spend more and more to sell capitalism as the system the world needs.

Only through lies and the threat of weapons, both fed with gigantic financial resources to the detriment of the real interests of humanity, does this hegemony continue...

See how, in order to obtain military domination, in the midst of the global crisis of capitalism, Washington maintains close to a thousand military bases around the planet. And it wages bloody wars to maintain its occupation of third world countries for the sake of its geopolitical objectives and the strategic interests of the big oil corporations.

But it is becoming increasingly difficult

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"What is at stake today for the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is the future of our peoples' right to sovereignty."



STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. BRUNO RODRIGUEZ PARRILLA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE COORDINATING BUREAU OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. CARACAS, VENEZUELA. JULY 20, 2019.

Esteemed comrade Jorge Arreaza, Minister of the People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

*Esteemed ministers and heads of delegations;
Delegates and guests;*

I thank the people and government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for their warm welcome.

It is an honor to share this opportunity with the more than 120 countries represented in the Non-Aligned Movement, a mechanism of political coordination that turns out to be indispensable under the present international juncture.

At the political level, claims of hegemony and domination in international relations attempt against the observance and implementation of the principles of International Law and the UN Charter.

At the economic level, underdevelopment, poverty, hunger and marginalization resulting from the unjust international economic order in force have been aggravated as a consequence of the impact of neo-liberal patterns imposed on the global economy. Meanwhile, nuclear weapons are being modernized and military expenditures, which in 2018 reached the figure of 1.822 trillion dollars, almost 2 trillion dollars -US military expenditures accounting for 649 billion of that big total- have increased even further.

Mr. President:

Old and new challenges have forced the Non-Aligned members to stay together in the defense of the founding principles of this Movement and in favor of peace

and our peoples' development.

The cruel war against the Syrian people has taken a toll on countless human lives.

The US unilateral decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the occupied Syrian Golan as part of the territory of that country; withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the nuclear program and increase unilateral sanctions and military threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran has created greater instability in the Middle East.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict requires a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement based on the creation of two States, whereby the Palestinian people would be able to exercise its right to free determination and have an independent and sovereign State based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The people of Puerto Rico have not been able to achieve their well-deserved

independence. Other peoples of the world are still unable to exercise their right to free determination.

We welcome the process of rapprochement and dialogue between the two Koreas as a means to achieve a lasting peace, reconciliation and stability in the Korean peninsula. We likewise strongly condemn the imposition of unjust unilateral sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the foreign interference in the Korean affairs.

Politicization and double standards prevail in the approach to human rights issues. The respectful dialogue, based on the principles of objectivity, impartiality, non-selectivity and respect for all peoples' free determination to choose their own political, economic, social and cultural systems as well as their development model are the indispensable support required by international cooperation in this area.

Today, more than ever, it is indispensable that our call for States to abstain from exercising pressures or coercion against other States -including the application or promotion of any sort of unilateral coercive measure, which is contrary to International Law- be heard.





Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro (center) is joined by a number of world diplomats & Foreign Ministers following a successful Non-Aligned Movement meeting, July 2019

During the last few months, the government of the United States has strengthened its outright hostility against Cuba. The tightening of the US blockade against Cuba and its extraterritorial implementation is an attack on International Law and the sovereignty of all States. The blockade is the main obstacle to our development and a flagrant violation of the human rights of all Cubans.

The Helms-Burton Act is the main political and legal instrument of the US aggressive policy, which violates and infringes upon peoples' free determination, freedom of trade, sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the peaceful coexistence among nations. Besides, this law has a remarkable extraterritorial intention, for it submits citizens and institutions of third States to the jurisdiction of US courts for legitimate actions that occurred outside the territory of that country.

Thus, the US government intends to destroy the Cuban Revolution by economically suffocating our people, causing hardships and sufferings to families and hindering development; but once again it will fail in its attempt, just as it has for 60 years now.

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continues to face an escalation of pressures and actions by the government of the United States, which are proper of a non-conventional war, namely attempted coup d' etats; economic sanctions and other hostile and

illegal actions that affect the wellbeing of the Venezuelan people.

The government of the Republic of Cuba reiterates its firm support to and solidarity with the constitutional President Nicolás Maduro Moros, the Bolivarian and Chavista Revolution and the civic and military union of its people. What is at stake today at the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is the future of our peoples' right to sovereignty. It is therefore indispensable to defend the principles of Bandung, the purposes and principles agreed at the Fourteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana and the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace that was approved by CELAC. These are the fundamental pillars to safeguard the sovereignty, independence and equality of all States.

We likewise reject the attempts to destabilize the government of the sister Republic of Nicaragua, a country of peace, where there have been remarkable social, economic and public safety advances that have favored its people, under the guidance of Commander President Daniel Ortega.

We express our all-out support and solidarity with the cultural and democratic Revolution led by our brother, President Evo Morales Ayma, who has placed the Plurinational State of Bolivia at the avant-garde of the struggle for sustainable development and

social justice.

Amidst an ever more dangerous and complex international situation, in which the security and wellbeing of our nations are facing unprecedented challenges, unity and solidarity among non-aligned countries become indispensable. For that it is necessary to preserve the concept of consensus applied historically within the Movement, which includes the celebration of broad consultations prior to the meetings and lengthy debates promoted within them in order to provide more possibilities for an understanding, always bearing in mind that what is being sought for is a sound agreement that does not require or entail unanimity. The document on the Methodology of Cartagena does not presuppose the imposition of numerical requirements in decision-making.

Equally vital is the preservation, revitalization and strengthening of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, whose founding principles continue to be fully valid.

Mr. President:

We recognize the contribution made by Venezuela to strengthen our Movement and preserve unity during its presidency.

We assure the Republic of Azerbaijan, the next president of the Non-Aligned Movement, of our full support.

We reaffirm Cuba's unswerving commitment with multilateralism and the efforts to advance towards a democratic, just and equitable international order that responds to the call for peace and sustainable development of all peoples. That world will be possible if we all get together and struggle to achieve it.

Thank you, very much.



Venezuela previously held a successful summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in 2016 where supporters of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro chanted slogans at a rally in Porlamar, Venezuela



FIRE THIS TIME



in Caracas, Venezuela



at the Sao Paulo Forum

"The Only Thing That Guarantees Triumph is Unity!"

*By Alison Bodine
& Tamara Hansen*

The 25th International "Foro de São Paulo" or Sao Paulo Forum (SPF) was held this year in Caracas, Venezuela. Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice (FTT) was honoured to be invited to participate in this large anti-imperialist conference which brought together thousands of people from Venezuela and around the world.

As members of the Editorial Board of Fire This Time Newspaper we (Tamara Hansen and Alison Bodine) were excited to travel to Caracas as two of the five delegates who attended the Sao Paulo Forum from Canada. This was both a chance to learn from people from across Latin America and around the world, as well as to share about the consistent work of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign.

This report will delve into the themes and questions raised by the SPF and our experience as invited guests at this monumental international event. We

will also collaborate on a second report about our observations and experiences in Venezuela, where we met with a wide cross-section of Venezuelan people. That second report will also include various interviews we recorded with Venezuelans from all walks of life: youth, students, human rights advocates, community organizers, and members of the Venezuelan government.

We hope these reports and interviews will give a better sense of what the mainstream media in Canada and the United States is purposely ignoring about Venezuela today.

What is the Sao Paulo Forum?

The 25th International Sao Paulo Forum was held July 25-28, 2019. The forum ended July 28 celebrating what would have been the 65th birthday of the late Comandante Hugo Chávez Frías, President of Venezuela 1999-2013 and leader of the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

All photos are from the Sao Paulo Forum in Caracas, Venezuela July 25-28, 2019. From top left: Mural painted for the forum; Fire This Time delegation at anti-imperialist march in Caracas; Forum about women's rights within the Bolivarian revolution; Alison & Tamara with Diosdado Cabello, President of the National Constituent Assembly; Closing panel with Adan Chávez, Venezuelan Ambassador to Cuba and the brother of Hugo Chávez, Miguel Díaz-Canel, President of Cuba, Nicolás Maduro, the President of Venezuela & Diosdado Cabello; Tamara is interviewed by EFE.

It is important to note that for the last eight months the democratically elected Venezuelan government of Nicolás Maduro has been fighting off a U.S. and Canada backed coup by right-wing opposition leader Juan Guaidó, who auto proclaimed himself President of Venezuela on January 23, 2019. The coup has been widely panned as a failure, as Guaidó is not recognized by any level of Venezuelan government. However, he has been dangerously recognized by about 50 countries (either imperialist or those who are easily bullied by imperialism). Meanwhile over 120 countries worldwide continue to recognize the government of Nicolás Maduro. The Maduro government is also recognized by the United Nations, International Monetary

Fund, the Non-Aligned Movement, and many other international institutions as the legitimate government of Venezuela.

Organizing the SPF in Venezuela – which was strongly attacked by right-wing forces in the U.S. and Latin America, because of its commitment to defending the self-determination of Venezuela and the democratically elected president, Nicolás Maduro – was yet another sign that his government is safely in control and continuing with the Venezuelan people to build the Bolivarian process.

The forum's central theme, "For Peace, Sovereignty and Prosperity of Peoples...Unity, Struggle, Battle, and Victory!" included several other demands against imperialist intervention in Latin America and in favor of building relationships based in solidarity and mutual respect. The nearly 2,000 delegates to the forum came from Venezuela and around the world. Representatives from 190 organizations participated, including political parties, social and workers' movements, elected officials, intellectuals, artists, and personalities such as the grandsons of Nelson Mandela and Salvador Allende.

Opening of the XXV Sao Paulo Forum - July 25

During the opening plenary of the Sao Paulo Forum, Julio Chávez, a vice-president of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and a deputy to Venezuela's National Constituent Assembly explained the history of the SPF and the need for the SPF today. He expressed, "25 years after the first Sao Paulo Forum there are two conflicting visions of the world: the vision of the Monroe Doctrine, driven by Donald Trump, inspired in the doctrine of domination and of a unipolar world ruled by the hegemony of the United States, versus the Bolivarian doctrine that proposes building a multipolar world."

The opening session was chaired by Julio Chávez and began with over a dozen greetings from international guests representing many regions of the world. Alison was invited to address the crowd as the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign as well as a representative from North America. In her talk she outlined the responsibility of people living in the U.S. and Canada

to fight against the blockade and U.S. intervention, in defense of Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination. She also proposed organizing a united international day of action around the world against imperialist aggression against Venezuela and called people to action in the streets in defense of Venezuela. Alison thanked the organizers



Top: Fire This Time delegation at anti-imperialist march in Caracas; Middle: Alison & Tamara with Carlos Ron, Vice-Minister for North America of the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry; Bottom: Opening plenary of the forum.

with the Cancillería (the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry) for inviting her to speak on behalf of North American delegates.

During the opening plenary an invited panel also gave more in-depth speeches on behalf of many countries throughout Latin America including Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Cuba.

Tamara arrived in Caracas just in time for the forum's opening evening event. The hall was bustling and crowded with hundreds of people networking, being interviewed by international media, reconnecting with old co-organizers, and waiting in anticipation for the event to start. When the event began people from around the world were formally welcomed

to the forum and Caracas. We heard the strong words of Adán Chávez, the Venezuelan Ambassador to Cuba, Vice President of International Affairs of the United Socialist

Party of Venezuela (PSUV), and the brother of Hugo Chávez. The event was concluded by Diosdado Caballo, the President of Venezuela's National Constituent Assembly. He expressed, "This is an extraordinary event for the unity of popular movements and parties from all over the world. Nobody is able to defend themselves against imperialism on their own, they will be able to fight battles and struggles [...] but the only thing that guarantees triumph is unity!"

At the end of the event we rushed to the front of the hall and were able to share a copy of FTT Newspaper and Alison's book "Revolution & Counterrevolution in Venezuela" (Battle of Ideas Press) with Diosdado Caballo.

The Second Day of the XXV Sao Paulo Forum - July 26

Part of the forum was an Expo showcasing the extraordinary art, culture, social, and political life in Venezuela. There were Indigenous artisans and women's cooperative workers sharing their foods and crafts; areas dedicated to seniors and youth; and displays with construction workers, the agricultural sector, scientists, the oil industry, and much more. We collected materials about the achievements of Venezuela's various social missions such as "Robinson" (for literacy), "Ribas" (for political education), and "Gran Misión Vivienda" (for housing).

As we walked through the Expo we were interviewed by many journalists who were interested in a North American perspective on the SPF. Among others, we spoke with the PSUV's Cuatro F Newspaper and web channel, Vive TV, the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry's web channel, and EFE.





That morning there were two dynamic forums in the women's area, the first on women in the Bolivarian revolutionary process and the second on the impact of U.S. sanctions and

blockade on the LGBTQ+ community in Venezuela.

In the afternoon there was a large youth forum held to discuss the gains and challenges of the Bolivarian Revolution. Here a passionate speaker outlined the history of the struggles faced by young people in Venezuela prior President Hugo Chávez coming to power in 1999. The event was attended by 500 dynamic youth who were mostly from different sectors in Venezuela. There were speakers from Venezuela, Cuba, Chile, Brazil, Honduras, and Argentina who each spoke about the challenges facing youth in their countries. Tamara met some of our young Venezuelan compañeras and compañeros who we have gotten to know over the years through our solidarity work. She had a chance to share a pizza and hear about their ongoing challenges within Venezuela, where a counter-revolutionary opposition continues to destabilize Venezuela (with the support of the government of the U.S. and Canada), but also their positive outlook for continuing to struggle for a more just future.

In the late afternoon Jorge Arreaza, Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, addressed the forum. He spoke with determination and vision about the impact of sanctions on Venezuela and the need to unite against the right-wing in Latin America. He concluded his talk on the importance of working together, but also the fundamental principal of independence. He explained, "Our Socialism has to be the heroic creation of our peoples, with our conditions and in our circumstances, but there must be some basic agreements with the left on which we can build and share!"

During the SPF, Fire This Time was also invited to join the Embassy Protection Collective (EPC) on a tour of Caracas. The Embassy Protection Collective are a group from the United States who for 37 days protected the Venezuelan

Embassy in Washington, DC from an unjust and illegal take over by supporters of the U.S.-backed puppet Juan Guaidó. EPC members were violently attacked by right-wing thugs for their important organizing and four were arrested and are currently facing unjust charges in the United States (to learn more about this important struggle read our interview with EPC members in FTT Volume 13



Top: Tamara signs a petition demanding Trump end the blockade against Venezuela; Bottom: Alison with Tareck El Aissami, Venezuela's Minister of Industries & National Production & Jorge Arreaza, the Foreign Minister of Venezuela

Issue 6).

While on this tour to see firsthand the many creative ways that the people and government of Venezuela are responding to increasing U.S.-led blockade and threats of war, Alison visited the "El Panal 2021" Commune along with the EPC. During this visit Alison participated in children's musical performances, a visit to a bakery, a small clothing factory, and a community radio.

The Third Day of the XXV Sao Paulo Forum - July 27

This day began with the gathering of working groups discussing points to add to the final resolutions of the SPF, as well the creation of their own working group reports to the final assembly. There were meetings for parliamentarians, women, people of African descent, Indigenous

people, and youth.

The meeting on youth was attended by 100 youth from around the world. The meeting focused on how to best inspire youth to join the struggle and how the specific issues youth are facing could be reflected in the working documents of the SPF. Tamara intervened as a member of the Fire This Time Editorial board and the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). Tamara spoke about how the gains of the revolutions in Venezuela and Cuba can inspire young people. She also outlined the solidarity work happening in Vancouver, Canada and motivated for the SPF to organize an international day of action in solidarity with Venezuela.

We also caught the end of the women's meeting and had the chance to meet an important revolutionary Venezuelan woman and octogenarian, María de Lourdes León, member of the National Constituent Assembly and leader in the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV). Her writing has been previously featured in the "Our Heritage" column of Fire This Time Newspaper. María was kind and encouraging when we explained to her the work of the FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign and was happy to receive the FTT Newspaper and a copy of Alison's book "Revolution & Counterrevolution in Venezuela".

In the afternoon there was an anti-imperialist march and rally organized. Thousands of Venezuelans participated as well as hundreds of international guests. We joined in the rally and were consistently approached by Venezuelans who wanted to take photos with us and know where we were visiting from. The rally featured many international speakers who energetically spoke about the need to continue the struggle for a better world despite obstacles, such as the U.S. blockade on Venezuela and other ongoing aggressions against Venezuela's sovereignty.

The Final Day of the XXV Sao Paulo Forum - July 28

On the final day of the SPF Alison was invited to a radio interview with YYKE Mundial, a national public radio station in Venezuela. Alison spoke alongside, Graça Xavier of the União Nacional por Moradia Popular (National Union for Popular Housing) in Brazil, about what they had experienced at the SPF and



Top: Tamara & Alison with leading Venezuelan feminist thinker and activist Maria Leon; Bottom: Alison is interviewed for Cuatro F, the media outlet of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV)

what they would be taking home with them.

The closing plenary of the 25th International Sao Paulo Forum was organized around mid-day with a final declaration being read, as well as many reports from the various working groups including parliamentarians, women, people of African descent, Indigenous people, and youth.

Soon we were loading on to buses towards Miraflores, the presidential residence in Venezuela. On our way we stopped at the famous Escalinata del Calvario (the Calvary staircase now known as el Parque Ezequiel Zamora, a Venezuelan independence fighter from the 1800s) where we took a giant group photo as a beautiful symbol of friendship and unity of the forum.

From there we walked to Miraflores where we gathered with hundreds of people to await the arrival of the special guests for the formal closing ceremony. We were very excited when Adán Chávez and Diosdado Cabello arrived along with Mónica Valente, Executive Secretary of the Sao Paulo Forum from Brazil; Miguel Díaz-Canel, the President of Cuba, and Nicolás Maduro, the President of Venezuela.

In President Díaz-Canel's remarks he celebrated the 65th birthday of the late Comandante Hugo Chávez. He said, "As those attending the forum have documented and discussed, it is necessary to articulate resistance to neoliberalism and imperialism in our respective communication strategies: create and nurture networks of truth against the offensive of lies. [...] On the 65th birthday of Chávez, that extraordinary communicator who emerged from the heart of Bolívar's homeland to bring us back the words and dreams of the Liberator, there can be no better tribute to his living memory than a progressive movement of the left, democratic and diverse as the parties and social groups that compose it, unleashing the unlimited creativity of the people to write their own recounting of history, and make history itself in the common struggle for justice. Happy birthday, Comandante!"

President Maduro explained many of the challenges of organizing the Sao Paulo Forum with a sense of optimism and fighting spirit. He explained, "The right-

wing shouted in desperation making declarations, statements, and pronouncements about the Sao Paulo Forum. Phoning deputies, governors, leaders to tell them not to come. [In a mocking North American accent] 'The US embassy would see it very positively if you did not go to Caracas.' If 2,000 had not come. However, courage, bravery, truth, love and solidarity prevailed. And I am sure - with work, with patience, and with all this spiritual strength we have - I am sure that, just as we lived through a first stage of resistance against neoliberalism and stopped the FTAA; I am sure that, just as we lived through a second stage of popular, successful and superior governments; I am sure that, just as we are living this stage with dignity in the streets fighting; there will come a new and fourth stage of counteroffensive of the peoples of Latin America of the Caribbean."

As the events of the SPF came to their natural conclusion, delegates from Canada were honoured to meet with the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for North America, Carlos Ron. This was a chance to discuss our perspectives on building a broader and more diverse Venezuela solidarity movement in Canada. It was a positive way to unite the delegates from Canada, with new ideas and plans for moving our work forward.

As the delegation from Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice attending the Sao Paulo Forum, we cherished this important opportunity to learn about how poor and working people are resisting in the face of growing U.S. aggression, sanctions, and threats of war. Our participation further highlighted our responsibility as people living in the U.S. and Canada to force the governments of the U.S. and Canada off the necks of those fighting for sovereignty, independence and self-determination in Venezuela, across Latin America and the Caribbean, and around the world.

*Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette
Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01*



Battle of Ideas Press

Revolution & Counter Revolution
in Venezuela



By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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FIRE THIS TIME



Interviews 3 Revolutionary

Venezuelan Youth

Fire This Time was honoured to meet and discuss with three revolutionary youth in Venezuela: Laurimar Simoza, Alexander Gil, and Albanys Montilla. Each spoke candidly about why they are supporting the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and how they are involved as young political activists and organizers in their own communities.

1 Fire This Time: Thank you for being here with Fire This Time Newspaper from Canada. Can you introduce yourself and say a little about yourself?

Laurimar Samosa: My name is Laurimar Simoza. I am 16 years old, and officially since Monday, I am a graduate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. I studied at the Bolivarian High School "Armando Reverón". One of the achievements of the revolution in Venezuela is that secondary education is totally free, which I benefited from. The Bicentennial Collection, which is a collection of books that, depending on the level of education, give you everything you need according to your educational plan. For those who do not have computers at their disposal or the possibility of going to a cyber café, they can connect to education through these books.

Before that, I lived in a very rural area known as Marapapiachi and my house was built by my parents and it was, a humble house, not a ranch, but a house. It was near a danger zone. It turns out that in 2011, in December of that year, one of the rains that normally affect the State and La Guaira occurred. Then many houses in that area were affected. In my case, the bathroom, the room where I slept, and part of another room fell apart. In the middle of that we spent about two months with my family in a shelter, provided by the government, and then they gave us an apartment as part of the Venezuela Housing Mission, which, if I'm not mistaken that year was the birth of the mission and I was a beneficiary.

From there I started living there in Maiquetia, which has approximately one thousand families or so. Then, followed by that they gave us the benefit of appliances, a fridge, a brand-new kitchen, new ones too, although we already had some, which, as we already had them, we returned as well.

Last year, if I'm not mistaken, I joined the militancy with the OBE, Bolivarian Student Organization, at the request of a friend. I've always had a left-leaning mind. Now that I realize what I already know, I can't say that I

could ever walk with the right-wing.

Now that I reflect back and with all the training processes that I have been involved in thanks to the PSUV, the youth and all these forums or opportunities that they have given us, I realized that I believe that no student can really walk with the right-wing. Once you realize that certain governments cut education, that they take away the possibility of scholarships, that education can become privatized, that it can become not by merit, but by some advantage – the OBE opened my eyes. I am infinitely thankful to that friend who got me involved in this, because together with several of my classmates we are like a big family. It is something that I believe, that these organizations have, when you join the militancy, a large family – either of youth or of women – whether in the Robert Serra Mission or Youth Chambas. We are a family. They welcome you and give you their love, they help you to train, they help you to prepare, they help us to have an ideal that often opens my eyes. It's different.

So, since last year I am militant within the OBE, which is the Bolivarian Student Organization that is recognized worldwide, of which I feel very proud. We came from participating in the CLAE which was the Latin American and Caribbean Student Congress and it was a real experience that opened my eyes, that reminds me why I want to walk here, why I want to continue with this. I want to fight so that not only Venezuela, but also other countries can achieve that free secondary education, including free meal programs from which I have benefited. Despite many changes we have found different ways to overcoming challenges. So, it has been a very beautiful experience, I am infinitely grateful for everything they have shown me.

Fire This Time: I got to know you a little during my visit these days and I know you have a personal passion.

Laurimar Simoza: Drawing. I have been drawing since I entered first year, before I liked to draw, but I started taking it seriously



Above: Laurimar drawing sketches of the speakers at the youth event during the Sao Paulo Forum, July 2019

Below: A sketch by Laurimar of Tamara at a book launch event. It says "Tamara, with care from the OBE (Bolivarian Youth Organization) in La Guaira."



during my first year. There are many people who supported me with advice or by giving me areas and materials to draw. Even during this school year, due to the social work law where all fifth year (and sixth-year students in the case of technical high schools) must help out in communities and

their high school, in this way we develop young people who will help society.

I helped create the murals inside our high school, to recover several areas and I really love it. Both because it helps me to express myself. Honestly, one of the most beautiful things when you draw is when the other person says 'oh wow, it's me' or 'oh wow thanks for the drawing' is a great feeling, at first it's like that and then practicing and seeing that you make people feel happy with your art is too beautiful.

Fire This Time: Thank you!

2 Fire This Time: Thank you for being here with Fire This Time. Can you introduce yourself? What is your name? What do you do?

Alexander Gil: My name is Alexander Gil. I



Alexander shares a rap he wrote dedicated to Simón Bolívar via Facebook, July 2019

come from a social movement called “Hijos del Sur” (Children of the South). We work in communities with our youth, in the popular neighborhoods. We establish training cells, both in Marxist-Leninist education and the theme of our history of Venezuela, which must be salvaged because a people without historical memory is doomed to modern slavery. We always keep that in mind, but we also have “aula alterna,” what we call alternate classrooms, which are productive classrooms.

We understand that as a result of the induced crisis they [the United States] are trying to impose on Venezuela, we have to respond with productivity especially us as young people. We have developed strategies to teach young people in our neighborhoods to become productive producers. We teach artisanal and screen-printing workshops, like this shirt that I have on [points to his t-shirt of Fidel Castro], we make it, we design it. We also have courses of different types of masonry and other trades, that is, we give young people the tools to educate and defend themselves, because the revolutionary process is also the struggle for productivity. In addition to the intellectual issue, that is praxis - theory and practice.

Fire This Time: In North America and in Europe there are many lies in the media about Venezuela. If you could communicate directly with the American or European people and youth, what do you want them to know about the Venezuelan reality?

Alexander Gil: Look, although in Venezuela an attempt has been made to impose a very strong opinion matrix – that we are a country at war, that we are a country where socialists are eating children – that old Second World War or post-World War II strategy to spread fear that communists eat children and all this kind of thing. I would tell them to come to Venezuela when they can, to come, to interact



The Fidel t-shirt Alexander wore during his interview, screen-printed at a community workshop, July 2019

with the communities. Even though Venezuela has very beautiful beaches and has very beautiful landscapes - Venezuela also has organized communities. I think that is our greatest potential.

That warmth you feel when you enter a Venezuelan community, you will not feel it in any other part of the world. That organization demonstrates our love for the project we are building. No other people in the world will give that to you. Venezuela has a lot to offer at the organizational level, at the level of cultural manifestations.

What I would say is that despite the fact that in mainstream media worldwide we are still projected as a country at war, as a country in crisis, we are still betting on advancing. As I told you at the beginning, we are still betting on a social, political and alternative model to capitalism that allows the greatest possible amount of happiness to our people.

Fire This Time: Thank you very much!

3 Fire This Time: Thank you very much for being here with Fire This Time. Can you introduce yourself?

Albanys Montilla: My name is Albanys Montilla. I am a student of political studies and government. I am 21 years old. I am a member of the “Hijos del Sur” Collective and of the feminist social organization Lydda Franco Farías. As I have been discussing with my compañera Tamara, it is important to meet as youth, to meet as women, to discuss what we are living through here in Venezuela, which is very challenging because we are going through a series of crises and situations created by the coercive economic measures imposed by the government of Donald Trump in the United States.

At the same time, we are building from the inside, we are developing as youth. We are empowering ourselves in our political spaces, in our economic spaces, to build a better country.

Within Venezuela’s historical evolution,

we have been creating processes of independence, since Simón Bolívar, since Spain colonized us to now, with the process of President Chávez. From which we have been experiencing attacks from the new empire of the new

United States. And we from the inside, as I have been saying, we have been resisting, acting as an example to Latin America and the world of what the revolutionary vanguard is. As youth we have to start rethinking the models of government that we have seen since our birth, in our development and the models that we must build for a better tomorrow, for a better future, because political governments are transitory. However, the models we must begin to discuss are socialist models, humanist models, what Marx asked us, and what a group of leaders who have been proposing a more human vision, a vision of development, a vision of coexistence for life of the human race on earth is what we must bet on and we must collectively build, understanding that as sister nations, as countries, as youth, we must coexist in a united way, in a way which unites our struggles.

Fire This Time: What do you think people in North America can do to show solidarity and help Venezuelans?

Albanys Montilla: First, I think they should come to Venezuela. We invite you to come, share with us, share our reality, understand what our communities and neighborhoods are, what our social movements are, what our schools are, what our training centers are, what everything we want to build will be. From there each person must review and understand the political leaders they choose each time they go to an election there in their country.

Fire This Time: Thank you!

Albanys Montilla: Thank you!



Albanys and Alison pose together at the Sao Paulo Forum, July 2019



"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

"Times change so quickly that if you and I don't keep up with the times, we'll find ourselves with an umbrella in our hand, over our head, when the sun is out. Or we'll find ourselves standing in the rain, with the umbrella inside the door. If we don't keep up with what's going on, we will not be able to display the type of intelligence that will show the world we know what time it is and that we know what is happening around us. [...]"

Policies change, and programs change, according to time. But objective never changes. You might change your method of achieving the objective, but the objective never changes. Our objective is complete freedom, complete justice, complete equality, by any means necessary. That never changes. Complete and immediate recognition and respect as human beings, that doesn't change, that's what all of us want. I don't care what you belong to, you still want that recognition and respect as a human being. But you have changed your methods from time to time on how you go about getting it. The reason you change your method is that you have to change your method according to time and conditions that prevail. And one of the conditions that prevails on this earth right now, that we know too little about, is our relationship with the freedom struggle of people all over the world."

- Malcolm X excerpt on "The Power of Africa," Audubon Ballroom, Dec 20, 1964



By Janine Solanki

On July 5, the people of Venezuela celebrated their Independence Day. On this date they not only marked their independence from Spain 208 years ago, but also their continued struggle against hostile foreign intervention – especially from the United States.

The imperialist intentions of the U.S. government to bring Venezuela under their domination are clear. Earlier this year a U.S.-backed coup attempt failed against the democratically elected Venezuelan government of Nicolás Maduro. On June 25, 2019 the U.S. government's special envoy to Venezuela, war criminal Elliot Abrams, once again insisted that the military option against Venezuela was still on the table.

The U.S. government and their allies, including the government of Canada, are also responsible for waging an economic war against the people of Venezuela through a brutal blockade. This includes over 150 sanctions which are estimated to have cost Venezuela more than \$130 billion since 2015.

Despite the severe economic pressure, the Bolivarian Revolution

is still committed to provide for its people. One of many examples is the Barrio Adentro Mission. This program, started in 2003, provides free comprehensive healthcare, dental care, and physical rehabilitation to poor and marginalized communities at hospitals and clinic throughout the country.

Around the world, peace-loving people are standing in solidarity



and defense of Venezuela's right to self-determination and sovereignty. Here in Vancouver, every month the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign holds a protest action demanding "U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!" On July 5, Venezuela's Independence Day, this action started with a picket in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. The protest also demanded that all charges be dropped against members

Support the Venezuelan Embassy Protection Collective Defense

The Embassy Protection Collective met with Venezuelan President Maduro and were given a replica of Simón Bolívar's saber, one of the highest recognitions the Venezuelan government has. It is the first time Venezuela has given this recognition to U.S. citizens. July 31, 2019



of the Embassy Protection Collective who were arrested by the U.S. government in their heroic defense of Venezuela's sovereignty. For 37 days the Embassy Protection Collective protected the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC from takeover by supporters of the U.S.-backed puppet, so-called "interim President" of Venezuela Juan Guaido. After energetic picketing and chanting, protesters held their picket signs and banners up under the building sign for the United States Consulate.

The picket was followed by outreach to Vancouverites at the busy downtown Robson plaza, with an info table, a huge Venezuelan flag and banners that attracted people walking by. Activists distributed hundreds of brochures, talked to passersby about what is really happening in Venezuela and collected petition signatures demanding Canada and the U.S. end their sanctions on Venezuela.

The day wrapped up with the resolve to keep organizing in defense of Venezuela, on the streets of Vancouver as well as by sending Fire This Time organizers to participate in solidarity trips and conferences in Venezuela. From July 25-28 Fire This Time attended the Foro de Sao Paulo in Venezuela, and this issue of Fire This Time features a report on their trip starting on page 8.

To find out about the next action in defense of Venezuela, visit www.firethistime.net or follow on Facebook, on Twitter @FTT_np and on Instagram @FTT.Venezuela



The Embassy Protection Collective was organized to stay in the Venezuelan Embassy with the aid of the government of Venezuela to protect it against those supported by the US who are trying to overthrow the elected government. When Embassy Protection Collective would not leave, organized right-wingers from Venezuela, Nicaragua and other countries tried to bully and intimidate those outside and inside the embassy, while police did nothing to stop this violence. One supporter was seriously injured and is in need of support. Eventually, the US government, in violation of international law, entered the embassy and arrested those present. The arrested protectors now face 1 year in prison and a large fine. They are fighting the charges and need support for their defense. A defense committee has been set up to support them and estimates that they need to raise around \$50,000 for their defense.

You can go to the web site for the defense committee here: <http://defendEmbassyProtectors.org> or reach the committee by email here: admin@defendEmbassyProtectors.org.

To get to the gofundme account to help Jason Charter who was injured by the right-wing crowd, go to <https://www.gofundme.com/t/medical-and-living-expenses-for-injured-activist>.

From: unacpeace.org

SUPPORT THE EMBASSY PROTECTORS DEFENSE COMMITTEE!

Collecting funds for the Embassy Protectors who defended the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC from U.S. government sponsored pro-coup Venezuelans for 37 days in the Spring of 2019.

Funds will go toward legal defense for the four members of the Embassy Protection Collective that have been charged with "interfering with protective services" and now face up to a year in jail and up to a \$100,000 fine, as well as other supporters.



<https://defendembassyprotectors.org>



Celebrating Comandante Fidel Castro
August 13, 1926-November 25, 2016
FIRETHISTIME.NET

An important biological species is endangered due to the accelerated and progressive destruction of its natural living conditions: man.

We are becoming aware of this problem only now when it is almost too late to tackle it. It is worthwhile indicating that the main responsibility for the brutal destruction of the environment lies with the consumer societies. They are the offspring of the old colonial metropolises and of imperialist policies that also begot the poverty and backwardness which are today the scourge of the overwhelming majority of humanity.

These societies, with only 20 percent of the world population, consume two-thirds of the metals and three-fourths of the energy produced in the world. They have poisoned oceans and rivers and contaminated the air; they have weakened and opened holes in the ozone layer and saturated the atmosphere with gases that impair climate conditions with catastrophic effects that we are starting to feel.

Forests are disappearing and deserts growing while billions of tons of fertile soil end up in the oceans every year. Numerous species face extinction. Overpopulation and poverty lead to desperate efforts for survival, even at the expense of Nature. The Third World nations cannot be held accountable for this, for only yesterday they were colonies and today they are still exploited and plundered by an unjust world economic order.

The solution cannot be to put off the development of those who need it most. The truth is that everything that today contributes to underdevelopment and poverty is tantamount to a flagrant attack on the ecology. As a result, tens of millions of men, women and children perish every year in the Third World, far more than in each of the two world wars. The unequal terms of trade, protectionism and the foreign debt are also an assault on the ecology and facilitate the destruction of the environment.

A better distribution of wealth and of the technologies available in the world could spare humanity such devastation. Less luxury and waste in a few countries could bring about a reduction of poverty and hunger in a large part of the planet.

Let's put an end to the transfer of lifestyles and consumer habits to the Third World that ruin the environment. Let human life be more rational. Let a just international economic order be implemented. Let science work toward a sustainable development without contamination. Let the ecologic debt be paid and not the foreign debt. Let hunger disappear and not man.

Now that the alleged threat of communism no longer exists, neither the pretexts for cold wars, the arms race nor military expenditures, what prevents the immediate use of those resources to foster development in the Third World and to thwart the planet's ecologic destruction?

Let selfishness and hegemonism cease, as well as callousness, recklessness and deceit.

Tomorrow it will be too late to do what should have been done a long time ago.

SPEECH BY COMANDANTE FIDEL CASTRO
AT THE U.N. CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT & DEVELOPMENT - JUNE 12, 1992



Venezuela y la confrontación imperialista en América Latina

¿Cuáles son nuestras tareas y perspectivas para defender a Venezuela?

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por Alison Bodine y Ali Yerevani

Traducido por Reynaldo Cruz Diaz

“Hoy, 200 años más tarde, podemos decirlo: después de haber perdido esa independencia que costó tanto, Venezuela, en estos últimos diez años... ha recuperado su independencia... y esta independencia recuperada es una puerta que debemos mantener abierta para que en los próximos años y décadas podamos recuperar todas las necesidades de las personas: libertad, igualdad, felicidad, vida, un país humano, un país pleno “.

El presidente Hugo Chávez dijo estas palabras en un desfile cívico-militar en Caracas, Venezuela, el 5 de julio de 2011, durante el 200 aniversario de la Declaración de Independencia de Venezuela de España. Como Chávez explica, a través de los logros del proceso revolucionario bolivariano, ahora, el pueblo de Venezuela no solo marca su independencia de España sino también tremendos avances hacia su Independencia del imperialismo estadounidense.

Hoy, junto con Cuba, el gobierno electo democráticamente del presidente Nicolás Maduro y el proceso revolucionario bolivariano representa la amenaza más grande para la hegemonía de los Estados Unidos en occidente.

El imperialismo de los Estados Unidos vs. La independencia de Venezuela

La 16ª Cumbre del ALBA-TCP se celebró en La Habana, Cuba, en diciembre de 2018. El ALBA-TCP, Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América - Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos, fundado en 2004 por Cuba y Venezuela, es una organización intergubernamental con una serie de acuerdos comerciales en curso establecidos como una alternativa al ALCA (Tratado de Libre Comercio de las Américas) controlado por los Estados Unidos. En sus comentarios durante la Cumbre, el presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, expuso claramente esta crítica confrontación entre el imperialismo y la independencia en Venezuela. Él dijo, “América Latina es una zona en disputa. Es una disputa muy reñida entre el proyecto neocolonial e imperialista de

los Estados Unidos y el proyecto de liberación, independencia y felicidad compartida de nuestros pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe. Es un área en medio de una disputa intensa; Hay una ofensiva contra los gobiernos progresistas. Ciertamente estamos en el ojo del huracán. Somos el objetivo de las amenazas del Imperio y sus gobiernos satélites en el continente, de una campaña brutal contra la Revolución Bolivariana y nuestra democracia”.

El presidente de los Estados Unidos, Trump, y su administración también han enmarcado esta confrontación en su propio interés. Al usar palabras como “democracia” y “derechos humanos”, el gobierno de los EE. UU. y sus aliados intentan pintar un cuadro que es peligrosamente similar al usado para justificar sus sangrientos ataques contra Afganistán, Irak, Libia y Siria, todos los países que han sido destrozados por la guerra, las sanciones y la ocupación encabezadas por Estados Unidos. Ninguno de estos países ha visto el prometido “retorno a la democracia” o el florecimiento de los derechos humanos, porque ese nunca fue el verdadero objetivo del gobierno de los Estados Unidos y sus aliados. Su objetivo siempre fue, como lo es hoy con Venezuela, volver a poner a estos países bajo el control del imperialismo estadounidense, sin importar el costo humano.

Irak, Libia, Siria y ahora Venezuela no son los únicos países que han sido cruelmente condenados a la destrucción por la maquinaria de guerra de los Estados Unidos durante esta nueva era de guerra y ocupación que comenzó con la invasión de Afganistán en 2001. En 2007, el general retirado de los Estados Unidos Wesley Clark hizo una entrevista en Democracy Now en la que reveló un memo clasificado que vio en 2001 donde se describía cómo Estados Unidos, “va a aniquilar a siete países en cinco años, comenzando con Irak, y luego Siria, Líbano, Libia, Somalia, Sudán y, rematando, Irán “.

Este memo es importante para entender porqué el gobierno de EE.UU. ataca a Venezuela. Esos siete países comparten hoy algo con Venezuela —su independencia



Manifestación contra el intento de golpe de Estado de Juan Guaidó y contra la interferencia de EEUU en Venezuela en Caracas, el 23 de febrero 2019



El presidente Trump se reunió con Fabiana Rosales, esposa de Juan Guaidó, en la Casa Blanca, el 27 de marzo 2019

ante el control de la política exterior de EE.UU. Sí, algunos de estos países son ricos en petróleo y otros recursos naturales, pero no todos ellos. Todos, sin embargo, habían o bien logrado independizarse de la hegemonía estadounidense o luchaban por hacerlo al momento de escritura del memorándum.

Continúa la guerra de EE.UU. contra Venezuela

Para estancar la marcha de Venezuela hacia su



El presidente Maduro en una manifestación en Caracas, Venezuela, 2 de febrero de 2019

independencia, el gobierno norteamericano y sus aliados han desatado la guerra, el terrorismo económico y una despiadada campaña mediática en su contra.

Las sanciones estadounidenses, que comenzaron a intensificarse bajo la presidencia de Barack Obama en 2014, consisten en más de 150 medidas que apuntan a destruir la economía venezolana y forzar el derrocamiento del presidente Maduro. En total, se estima que las sanciones impuestas por EE.UU., Canadá, la UE y Suiza hayan costado más de 130 mil millones de dólares a Venezuela desde 2015, suma equivalente al Producto Interno Bruto (PIB) de Venezuela en un año. Además, hay casi 5,5 millones de dólares ilegalmente congelados por instituciones financieras que incluyen el Citibank y el Bank of England.

El bloqueo imperialista contra Venezuela ha privado al país de los métodos normales y establecidos para el financiamiento y el comercio internacional. Es una campaña deliberada del gobierno norteamericano y sus aliados para sabotear la economía venezolana y negarle a su pueblo el acceso a cosas tan indispensables como la comida, medicinas y otros bienes básicos.

Un ejemplo del impacto humano del régimen de sanciones contra Venezuela es el sector de la salud. El gobierno norteamericano y su prensa nunca mencionan una palabra sobre las sanciones impuestas contra Venezuela. En cambio, quieren que la gente de todo el mundo crea que los déficits en medicinas son causados por la desidia del gobierno de Venezuela.

Sin embargo, según explicó Marcel Quintana, co-fundador del grupo LGBT para la conscientización sobre el SIDA “ASES Venezuela”, en una entrevista con Michael Fox de Real News Network, el bloqueo está impactando incluso en la habilidad de Venezuela para cooperar con organizaciones internacionales de salud para asegurar el suministro de medicinas. Explica “Entendemos que la Organización

Panamericana de la Salud ha tenido que cambiar las cuentas [usadas para comprar las medicinas] cuatro veces p o r q u e las siguen bloqueando. El bloqueo no es solo contra el gobierno, es también contra la gente que vive con VIH, es contra la gente

que vive con cáncer porque no permiten que las medicinas entren al país. No solo están bloqueando el país, sino también la salud de la gente que vive con VIH. Y esto es serio. Muy serio.”

Los EE.UU. siguen amenazando a Venezuela con una futura intervención militar. En una conferencia de prensa del 25 de junio de 2019, el enviado especial del gobierno norteamericano para Venezuela, el criminal de guerra Elliot Abrams insistió nuevamente que la opción militar contra Venezuela aún estaba sobre la mesa. Al mismo tiempo, anunció que un barco hospital de la Fuerza Naval Norteamericana había salido de Miami rumbo a Venezuela. Más que un barco hospital, esta nave de la Marina Estadounidense es parte de las operaciones militares norteamericanas en Latinoamérica y el Caribe, y tiene como objetivo demostrar que “el Comando Sur norteamericano está comprometido con la región en apoyo a nuestros socios caribeños y latinoamericanos, al igual que a los desplazados venezolanos que siguen escapando de la brutal opresión del ex régimen de Maduro unido a la crisis política, económica y humanitaria que provocó,” como declaró el comandante del Comando Sur Norteamericano. Esto es una provocación más contra el gobierno venezolano, al igual que una afronta a la soberanía y dignidad de Venezuela al inferir que su pueblo y su gobierno no son capaces de ocuparse de sus propios asuntos.

El gobierno de Canadá también continuó teniendo un rol principal en la campaña imperialista para derrocar al gobierno de Venezuela y revertir los logros hechos por la gente pobre, trabajadora y oprimida en el proceso revolucionario bolivariano. Esto incluye las sanciones ilegales e injustas contra casi 100 venezolanos.

Según publicó en su cuenta de Twitter la Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores de Canadá, Chrystia Freeland refiriéndose al derechista y pro-imperialista Grupo de Lima, “Canadá y nuestros socios del Grupo de Lima Argentina, Brasil y Chile nos encontramos en el marco

del #G20 para discutir las violaciones a los derechos humanos del régimen de Maduro y nuestro compromiso común de un regreso pacífico a la democracia en #Venezuela.” Recientemente, Freeland también ha tenido charlas respecto a Venezuela con el Secretario de Estado norteamericano Mike Pompeo y la portavoz de la Cámara de Representantes, Nancy Pelosi, según reportó la cadena CBC News en Canadá.

La clase gobernante capitalista en Estados Unidos y otros países imperialistas está imponiendo la guerra y el bloqueo a Venezuela para fortalecer su posición en América Latina y el Caribe, en busca también de recuperar la hegemonía en la región. Su legitimación del autoproclamado “Presidente interino” de Venezuela Juan Guaidó y su continuo apoyo a la violenta oposición contrarrevolucionaria en Venezuela también demuestra que están comprometidos a mejorar la posición de la clase capitalista nacional contra el gobierno de Venezuela y el proceso revolucionario bolivariano.

Venezuela defiende su soberanía y autodeterminación

Han pasado más de cinco meses desde que el gobierno de Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas nombraron a Juan Guaidó “presidente interino” de Venezuela. Pese al apoyo norteamericano, su título ha fracasado totalmente en llevar a cabo un golpe de estado contra el presidente democráticamente electo Nicolás Maduro. De hecho, el lacayo de Guaidó en Colombia ha sido expuesto por el Panam Post por desfalcar más de \$100.000 USD que estaban destinados a la “ayuda humanitaria” y mantener a los desertores del ejército venezolano.

En contraste, la gente en Venezuela ha enfrentado un bloqueo criminal, el sabotaje a su red eléctrica, la continua violencia derechista y otros intentos de golpes y asesinatos con dignidad y constante movilización. Valientemente, el pueblo de Venezuela ha seguido defendiendo su democracia, a su presidente, y el proceso revolucionario bolivariano.

El gobierno de Venezuela también ha defendido su independencia por medio de su compromiso con la solidaridad y la cooperación con otros países y movimientos a lo largo de toda Latinoamérica y el Caribe. Esto incluye su participación en y formación de organizaciones como el ALBA-TCP y la CELAC (Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y el Caribe), al igual que su continuo compromiso a Petrocaribe. Un componente de Petrocaribe es un programa que entrega petróleo de Venezuela a los países participantes a cambio de bienes y servicios.

La firme defensa venezolana de su soberanía e independencia está creando una profunda

confrontación con el imperialismo.

Las discusiones y debates son buenos pero formar un movimiento de solidaridad con Venezuela es una prioridad y una necesidad

Seamos claros, la agresión imperialista encabezada por EE.UU. hacia Venezuela no es por ideología. No es por las ideas abstractas sobre el carácter político del gobierno venezolano, no es una batalla entre nociones de bien y mal, tampoco parte del énfasis de que es por el petróleo.

La guerra contra Venezuela hoy es una guerra contra un país que está logrando su independencia del imperialismo.

La independencia del imperialismo y la soberanía, no el socialismo, es el mensaje que se transmite hoy desde Venezuela a los pueblos de América Latina y el mundo. El gobierno de EE.UU. y sus aliados no pueden aceptar o tolerar un creciente movimiento anti-imperialista, uno que tenga la capacidad de generar la unión de países coloniales y semi-coloniales en Latinoamérica y todo el mundo en contra de los matones imperialistas y sus interminable ímpetu por la hegemonía del mercado capitalista, el neocolonialismo y la sobre-explotación.

Muchos intelectuales de izquierda y analistas respetados y progresistas en Norteamérica y Europa están prestando tal vez demasiada atención, o se dejan llevar por las dinámicas internas de la revolución Bolivariana, sin percatarse de que nuestra tarea principal no es especular sobre el proceso revolucionario en Venezuela. Debemos entender que es lo que Venezuela necesita ahora y cuáles son las tareas principales e inmediatas que de esto se desprenden, especialmente como habitantes de Estados Unidos o Canadá, en el vientre de la bestia. La mejor manera de contribuir con la lucha del pueblo venezolano contra la oposición derechista pro-imperialista dentro de Venezuela y los constantes ataques, sanciones e intervenciones del imperialismo es formar un movimiento anti-guerra y anti-imperialista contundente que también se enfoque en generar un movimiento de solidaridad con Venezuela en defensa de la autodeterminación de su pueblo.

Nuestra única opción y responsabilidad es formar un movimiento de masas efectivo para defender al pueblo venezolano y apoyar su lucha contra la agresión imperialista, centrado especialmente en las de Estados Unidos y Canadá. Tenemos demasiadas conferencias, pero no suficientes acciones masivas. Tenemos demasiados clubes y círculos de discusiones, sin acciones militantes. ¿Por qué tantos grupos y organizaciones apoyan Venezuela pero no demuestran unidad en acciones? ¡Juntos podemos organizar miles de personas en Washington DC y Ottawa, mientras las dos protestas nacionales e internacionales en Washington DC trajeron apenas entre 700 y 1,000 personas a la calle!

La revolución venezolana y la defensa de su independencia presenta una oportunidad única a los pacifistas, izquierdistas, progresistas y otros activistas humanitarios para rebasar esta fragmentación. Las clases trabajadoras y oprimidas de EE.UU. y Canadá deben escucharnos y vernos en acción para creernos y unírseles. Recordemos el Movimiento de Derechos Civiles, el movimiento contra la guerra en Vietnam, el Movimiento por la Enmienda de Igualdad de Derechos (ERA). ¡Sí, podemos!

Ideas finales y conclusiones

Un reciente artículo del Ministro de Exteriores venezolano Jorge Arreaza, impreso en este número de Fire This Time, claramente describe nuestra tarea como personas humanitarias, progresivas y anti-guerreristas, “Venezuela es el epicentro de una disputa histórica.” Los progresistas, intelectuales izquierdistas y activistas, en vez de enfocarse en cómo debe desarrollarse la revolución venezolana y cuáles son las mejores opciones que deben tomar los líderes del proceso revolucionario bolivariano, deben centrar sus esfuerzos, tiempo y energía en formar un movimiento de solidaridad fuerte y efectivo con el pueblo venezolano y su gobierno revolucionario.

Nuestro trabajo, como gente fuera del país, no es ocuparnos con lo que sucede allí internamente respecto a lo que es bueno o malo para los venezolanos. No es nuestro trabajo descubrir, ahora, que la batalla de los imperialistas con Venezuela es para explotar su petróleo y recursos naturales, una ambición evidente de los poderes coloniales. Nuestro trabajo es enfocarnos totalmente en la guerra de los imperialistas contra Venezuela como país independiente. Con un poco de pensamiento crítico, necesitamos aclarar para nosotros mismos la situación objetiva y las intenciones imperialistas. ¿Por qué los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas han impuesto la guerra y la ocupación desde 2001 sobre Afganistán, Irak, Libia, Siria, Yemen y ahora amenazan a Irán? ¿Todas estas guerras, ocupaciones y sanciones son realmente por el petróleo y el robo de los recursos naturales? Si nuestra respuesta es sí, entonces nos encerramos en un pensamiento simplista y malentendemos la naturaleza del imperialismo y la profunda crisis económica actual sin solución del sistema de mercado capitalista.

La raíz de todos los conflictos y batallas de todos los países imperialistas contra los países independientes, incluyendo los países coloniales y

La campaña de solidaridad con Venezuela de Fire This Time en la acción mensual en Vancouver, 5 de julio 2019



semi-coloniales, es el deseo de negarles la soberanía y autodeterminación. Todo lo demás es secundario.

Hemos visto con claridad que el heroico pueblo de Venezuela y su gobierno revolucionario, bajo el mando del Comandante Chávez y ahora el democráticamente electo Presidente Maduro, son totalmente capaces de lidiar con toda clase de sabotajes internos y contrarrevolucionarios. Es urgente incrementar nuestro esfuerzo para explicar a la gente en los países industriales y avanzados que la escasez de comida, bienes, medicinas y necesidades básicas son el resultado de las inhumanas, brutales y pesadas sanciones y bloqueos imperialistas. Debemos formar un movimiento en defensa del pueblo venezolano con el slogan principal de “¡EE.UU., Canadá y otros países imperialistas, manos fuera de Venezuela!” y “¡Cesen el bloqueo contra Venezuela!” debemos formar un movimiento para defender la autodeterminación y la soberanía de Venezuela. Trabajemos y enfoquémonos juntos en un esfuerzo unido para estas exigencias básicas. Venceremos.

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EL CRISIS DE MIGRANTES Y REFUGIADOS: HECHO POR IMPERIALISMO

* EN ESPAÑOL *

Por Alison Bodine y Tamara Hansen

Traducido por Ana Laura Torres

El titular el artículo de la CBC dice: “Encuesta sugiere que la mayoría de los canadienses se opone a aceptar más refugiados”. Este artículo informa que “los resultados [de la encuesta] no sorprenden a los expertos y defensores de la inmigración, que señalan un cambio negativo en las percepciones sobre migración en todo el mundo, especialmente cuando se trata de refugiados. Dicen que la tendencia está avivada por la cobertura de los medios sobre la situación de los solicitantes de asilo que cruzan la frontera entre Canadá y los Estados Unidos.”

Alemayehu Beyene, un etíope que llegó a Canadá con su familia hace 2 años y medio, después de pasar unos 20 años en un campamento de refugiados en Sudán, dijo a CBC: “Tal vez no entienden por qué vinimos aquí. [...] Nadie quiere ser un refugiado. Alguien te obliga a convertirte en uno”. Entonces, ¿de dónde vienen los refugiados? Y como país industrializado, rico y avanzado, ¿por qué tiene el gobierno de Canadá el deber y la obligación humana de dar la bienvenida y apoyar a cientos de miles más de refugiados y migrantes?

Crisis para la humanidad: refugiados y migrantes del mundo

Hoy en día, hay más de 70,8 millones de personas en todo el mundo que han sido desplazadas por la fuerza de sus hogares, según informa la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR). Las personas cuyos hogares se han vuelto inhabitables debido a la guerra, la ocupación, la pobreza extrema y la crisis climática, dejaron todo lo que alguna vez conocieron en busca de un lugar seguro para vivir.

El mar Mediterráneo sigue siendo el cruce más mortal para los migrantes, que suben a pequeñas embarcaciones con pocas posibilidades de llegar a las costas de Grecia, Italia o España. Entre 2014 y 2018, más de 17.900 personas desaparecieron o fueron

encontradas ahogadas en el Mediterráneo (Organización Internacional para las Migraciones-OIM).

Viajando desde América Central también mueren miles de personas a medida que atraviesan México, incluyendo cerca de 2.000 que murieron en los últimos cinco años en la frontera de EE. UU. y México (OIM). Algunas de las personas que mueren en la frontera ya han caminado durante meses, en algunos casos más de 2.250 kilómetros en busca de seguridad en los Estados Unidos.

Con muchos cuerpos sin identificar e irrecuperables, estos números son solo una estimación de la inmensa tragedia humana que es la migración forzada.

La nueva era de la guerra y la ocupación

Desde la invasión de Estados Unidos / Canadá / OTAN a Afganistán en 2001, el mundo se ha visto envuelto en una nueva era caracterizada por las guerras y ocupaciones imperialistas. La avanzada bélica liderada por los Estados Unidos ha recorrido desde el norte de África hasta el Medio Oriente, a través de América Latina y hacia el Caribe, y con cada momento que pasa, amenaza a otro país en desarrollo en otra esquina del mundo. Por supuesto, existe una correlación obvia y directa entre la guerra y los refugiados. A modo de ejemplo, la Agencia de Refugiados de la ONU (ACNUR) informó que, a partir de junio de 2019, el 57% de los refugiados provienen de solo tres países del norte de

África y Medio Oriente, el epicentro de las guerras encabezadas por Estados Unidos: Siria, Afganistán y Sudán del Sur.

Durante los últimos 18 años, desde que comenzó la nueva era de guerra y ocupación, los gobiernos imperialistas como EE. UU., Canadá y los países de la Unión Europea no han dado respiro a la guerra, la violencia y la devastación económica impuestas contra los pueblos de Afganistán hasta Irak, desde Siria hasta Yemen; y desde Haití hasta Libia. Estas intervenciones y sanciones militares han destruido infraestructura, viviendas, hospitales, escuelas y han desgarrado completamente el tejido social de muchos países. En medio de una guerra sin final a la vista, muchos se vieron obligados a huir, primero a sus hogares, luego a sus países y, finalmente, a escapar de la región por completo.

Los gobiernos imperialistas también son responsables de la devastación económica impuesta a los países coloniales y semicoloniales de todo el mundo. El saqueo y la explotación de estos países continúan llenando los bolsillos de los ultra ricos, mientras destruyen las condiciones de vida y el medio ambiente del tal llamado “tercer mundo”.

La mayoría de las personas que huyen de sus hogares (80% según el ACNUR) se asientan en un país vecino, con la esperanza de regresar a su hogar algún día o por carecer de los recursos para viajar más lejos. Sin embargo, para aquellos que sí arriesgan sus vidas por



Detenidos en Elleniko II Campamento de refugiados en Grecia protesta contra las condiciones en el sitio, 5 de febrero 2017



La tragedia de la crisis de refugiados en dos continentes. Izquierda: el cuerpo del refugiado sirio de 2 años Aylan Kurdi fue arrastrado a una playa turca después de que el bote en el que su familia volcó, 2 de septiembre 2015 Derecha: Óscar Alberto Martínez Ramírez y su hija Valeria, de 2 años, se ahogaron mientras cruzaban el Río Grande en ruta hacia Estados Unidos desde El Salvador, 24 de junio 2019

un lugar seguro y protegido, estas dificultades suelen ser solo el comienzo, ya que enfrentan la violencia continua, el acecho de traficantes de personas y la violencia sexual, así como las políticas fronterizas inhumanas, el racismo y la intolerancia cuando finalmente alcanzan la frontera con Europa, Canadá o los Estados Unidos.

Fotos que nos recuerdan nuestra humanidad compartida

Una vez más, una fotografía devastadora de un ser humano sin vida acercó la tragedia de la migración a los hogares de millones de personas en los Estados Unidos y en todo el mundo. En la foto desgarradora, Oscar Martínez y su hija de 23 meses, Angie Valeria, están boca abajo en la orilla del Río Grande, al igual que Alan Kurdi, el niño sirio de 2 años que murió en 2015 boca abajo en las arenas de una playa turca.

Estas imágenes cuentan la misma historia de penurias y, lo que es más importante, ilustran los extremos a los que las personas están dispuestas a llegar cuando ya no hay otras opciones. La culpa de sus muertes y las de miles de personas como ellos recae directamente sobre los hombros de los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas, sobre las guerras, las ocupaciones y el saqueo que los ha obligado a escapar y las políticas migratorias inhumanas que los han dejado sin ningún lugar a donde ir.

Los migrantes de América Central y América Latina buscan una nueva vida en los EE. UU.

Como informó Bloomberg News, “Más de 144,000 migrantes fueron detenidos a lo largo de la frontera de los Estados Unidos en mayo, un incremento del 32% con respecto a abril, y el mayor total mensual en 13 años, según Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza. Casi cuatro quintas partes de los detenidos procedían del Triángulo del Norte [referencia usada para los países de Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala]”.

En América Latina y el Caribe, más de 500 años de colonización e intervención imperialista y saqueo han cavado una herida

profunda. La falta de estabilidad política y económica y la violencia devastadora impuesta en estos países son el resultado de las 56 intervenciones militares de los EE. UU. (desde 1890), la llamada “Guerra de EE. UU. contra las drogas” y la continua intromisión de este país para asegurar el robo y el saqueo de los recursos de América Latina, beneficiar a la clase capitalista imperialista y permitirles crear un nivel de vida aceptable para las clases trabajadora y media en países como los Estados Unidos. ¿Cuántas personas de los países industrializados avanzados realmente se dan cuenta de que su comodidad y estándar de vida relativamente estable se lo deben a los miles de millones en los países coloniales y semicoloniales como Puerto Rico y Haití, a El Salvador y Brasil; a Nigeria y el Congo; a la India y Filipinas? Los poderes coloniales como Canadá y los Estados Unidos han desconectado con éxito a su gente del resto del mundo. Debemos volver a conectar esta desconexión.

La relación entre la intervención de los Estados Unidos en América Latina y la situación devastadora en Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala se expresa más claramente en el golpe de estado en Honduras del año 2009 apoyado por EE. UU.. Hace 10 años, Estados Unidos respaldó el derrocamiento de parte de la derecha del gobierno electo de Manuel Zelaya. Desde entonces, han escalado la represión política, la violencia estatal y el aumento de la pobreza en Honduras, creando vacíos estructurales e institucionales, junto con una profunda inestabilidad en todo el país. Luego de que el golpe de Estado apoyado por los Estados Unidos en Honduras terminara con la presidencia de Manuel Zelaya, este país con perspectivas de desarrollo político y económico se convirtió en un Estado fallido.

Las pandillas en toda la región, como la MS-13 a la que a menudo hace referencia Trump, el presidente de los Estados Unidos, se formaron primero en las prisiones estadounidenses y luego se trasplantaron a Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala cuando las personas fueron liberadas de la prisión y luego deportadas. Como informa el ACNUR,

las condiciones de vida de las personas en el Triángulo del Norte no están mejorando, “las tasas de homicidios actuales se encuentran entre las más altas registradas en América Central. Varias ciudades, entre ellas San Salvador, Tegucigalpa y San Pedro Sula, se encuentran entre las 10 más peligrosas del mundo. La evidencia más visible de violencia es la alta tasa de homicidios brutales, pero hay otros abusos contra los derechos humanos que están aumentando, incluido el reclutamiento de niños para las pandillas, la extorsión y la violencia sexual”.

Debido a la inestabilidad política y la profunda pobreza en la región, muchas personas se ven obligadas a abandonar sus lugares de origen en busca de una vida mejor, a veces debido a amenazas y violencia, y otras debido a la falta de oportunidades financieras. El ACNUR predice que “para fines de 2019, se espera que haya 539.500 personas desplazadas de América Central”. Muchas de estas personas desplazadas están tratando desesperadamente de ir al norte y encontrar un camino hacia los Estados Unidos. La reacción del gobierno de los EE. UU. ante el creciente número de migrantes en su frontera con México, país al que culpa de la desesperación de los migrantes, ha sido criminalizar y detener a quienes intentan huir de una situación insostenible en su país de origen. Ahora, la administración de Trump se enfrenta nuevamente a una reacción violenta por las terribles condiciones para los niños en la frontera de EE. UU./ México, donde quedan solos en jaulas, sin cuidados y sin siquiera un cepillo de dientes. Desde finales de 2018, seis niños han muerto mientras estaban detenidos en la frontera.

Prisiones al aire libre, campos de concentración, llámelos como guste, el gobierno de los Estados Unidos les está negando a los migrantes su dignidad humana básica, y mucho menos respeta sus derechos y protecciones garantizadas según el derecho internacional.

Cada día llegan más niños, junto con más migrantes. Las políticas del gobierno de los Estados Unidos están causando muertes y

sufrimiento, y sin lugar a todas, solo hace falta un breve repaso de la historia para confirmar que un muro y la criminalización no son elementos disuasorios para quienes no tienen opciones. Solo hace que los cruces sean más caros y más mortales.

Los migrantes de Oriente Medio y África del Norte buscan una nueva vida en Europa

“En total, hubo un 24% menos de personas que viajaron por el Mediterráneo en 2018 en comparación con 2017, y un 84% menos que en 2015. La proporción de personas que perdieron la vida durante el cruce aumentó porque se vieron obligadas a elegir rutas más peligrosas y la guardia costera libia, que ahora está patrullando la costa, carece de las capacidades de los servicios de rescate europeos. Según el Consejo Noruego para los Refugiados, un 7% de todos los que viajaron por el Mediterráneo en 2018 perdieron la vida.” -Informe “Hora de ajuste de la política europea de refugiados” del Consejo Noruego para los Refugiados.

El miedo experimentado, especialmente por las mujeres migrantes, es evidente en una entrevista con la revista Nation en abril de 2019, y también es sorprendentemente similar a las entrevistas y artículos sobre los peligros que enfrentan las mujeres y los niños que emigran del Triángulo del Norte. The Nation entrevistó a Leila (no es su nombre real), una refugiada de Afganistán en el campamento de refugiados de Samos en Grecia, donde 4.000 personas viven en una instalación con 648 camas. Leila explicó: “Cuando llegamos aquí en diciembre no había lugar para dormir, así que

tuvimos que comprar una tienda de campaña con nuestro propio dinero e instalarnos en el bosque fuera del campamento. [...] Estaba demasiado conmovida por las condiciones para siquiera pensar en lo frío o apretado que estaba, pero pensé que al menos habría reglas y seguridad. Pero no hay reglas. La gente tiene peleas en el campamento y los ves sangrando, pero nadie hace nada. Los hombres beben y festejan toda la noche, así que es demasiado ruidoso para dormir. Es tan aterrador por la noche, que tenemos que movernos juntos tomados de la mano para ir al baño”.

Mientras el gobierno de los EE. UU. y sus aliados, incluidos los países de la Unión Europea, continúan bombardeando, sancionando e invadiendo Oriente Medio y el norte de África, continuará la migración a Europa. Los gobiernos europeos deben asumir la responsabilidad de la devastación que han causado y aceptar a los migrantes y refugiados con los brazos abiertos.

¡Canadá puede y debe actuar mejor!

Quizás haya quien opine, bueno, Canadá es diferente y acoge a los migrantes y los refugiados. Sin embargo, esto distorsiona el hecho de que según el informe de tendencias globales de ACNUR en 2018, Canadá solo ha recibido a 28.100 refugiados de los aproximadamente 1,4 millones que necesitaban ser reubicados (globalmente, lamentablemente, hubo más de 90.000 reubicaciones ese año). Otros también podrían decir que Canadá es diferente porque no estuvo involucrada en la guerra en Irak, o porque todavía es vista por algunos como un país pacífico. Sin embargo, las manos del gobierno de Canadá también están cubiertas de la sangre de las personas en todo el Medio Oriente y el norte de África; pensemos en Afganistán, Libia, Sudán y Mali. Actualmente, Canadá está incluso en Irak, con 250 miembros de las Fuerzas Armadas Canadienses programados para permanecer allí hasta noviembre de 2020 (sitio web del Gobierno de Canadá).

En comparación con la economía, la población y la gran masa de tierra de Canadá, el gobierno ha establecido objetivos de acogida de refugiados vergonzosamente bajos. En 2018 fue de 7.500 y en 2019 se programaron 9.300. ¿Con más de 25 millones de refugiados en el mundo, Canadá ni siquiera acepta 10.000 al año? El mensaje general de la política de inmigración de Canadá sigue siendo que hay puertas abiertas para los ricos, y un proceso largo y traicionero para los pobres y explotados que desean quedarse

por más de un corto tiempo para trabajar por bajos salarios.

No solo eso, el CBC descubrió en octubre de 2018 que la Agencia de Servicios Fronterizos de Canadá (CBSA por sus siglas en inglés) tiene un plan para aumentar el número de expulsiones de migrantes considerados “inadmisibles” a un objetivo de 10.000 por año. Entonces, ¿ahora Canadá deportará a más personas de las que se están estableciendo como refugiados?

¡Abra las fronteras – estatuto jurídico y derechos humanos, democráticos y civiles!

Después de muchas promesas, desde que Trudeau asumió el cargo en otoño de 2015, el gobierno liberal finalmente ha aceptado a poco más de 50.000 refugiados de Siria, combinando a quienes son patrocinados por el gobierno y por privados. ¡No es suficiente!

Además, según lo informado por la revista Maclean, “el presupuesto federal de 2019, por ejemplo, propone quitarles el derecho a una audiencia completa de refugiados”. ¡Vergüenza para el gobierno de Trudeau por decir que están acogiendo a los refugiados, al mismo tiempo que les quitan derechos!

El gobierno de Canadá tiene la responsabilidad de aceptar de inmediato a 200.000 refugiados y otorgarles el estatuto jurídico, así como el acceso a todos sus derechos humanos, democráticos y civiles.

Sin embargo, en lugar de aceptarlos con los brazos abiertos, como tienen la responsabilidad de hacerlo, los gobiernos de los Estados Unidos y Canadá, junto con sus aliados, están criminalizando no solo a los migrantes sino también a las personas que trabajan para salvar sus vidas. En junio de 2019, el gobierno de Italia arrestó a la capitana de un barco de Sea Watch que había rescatado a 40 personas del Mediterráneo por haber violado la prohibición de que los migrantes desembarcaran en las costas italianas. En los Estados Unidos, Scott Warren enfrenta 20 años de prisión por dejar agua y alimentos a los migrantes que cruzan la frontera México-EE. UU. a través del terreno mortal del desierto.

Como personas pobres, trabajadoras y oprimidas en los EE. UU. y Canadá, debemos solidarizarnos con los migrantes y refugiados que se presentan en la puerta de la Casa Blanca o la Colina del Parlamento, y hacer saber a los gobiernos imperialistas que ya no pueden seguir ignorando el sufrimiento que han impuesto a millones de personas en el Medio Oriente, África y América Latina.

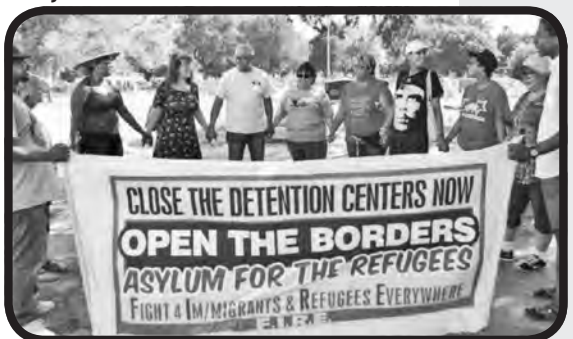
¡Abran las fronteras de forma inmediata e incondicional!

La versión original del artículo fue publicada en inglés en Fire This Time Vol. 13 Ed. 7 (julio 2019)

*Sigue Alison en Twitter: @Alisoncolette
Sigue Tamara en Twitter: @THans01*



Protesta estadounidense contra los centros de detención de migrantes en Manhattan, Nueva York, 2 de julio 2019



Delegación de FIRE visitando el Centro de Derechos Humanos del Sur de Texas en Texas, 30 de junio 2018

CHELSEA'S MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF STONEWALL

Chelsea Manning is a former U.S. military intelligence analyst and whistleblower. At great personal risk, she leaked U.S. diplomatic cables as well as videos and documents, exposing U.S. war crimes including mass killings, torture and corruption. For acting upon her conscience, in May 2010 Chelsea Manning was arrested, she served seven years of a 35-year jail term, during which she also had to fight for her rights as a trans woman demanding access to medical care related to her transition. Former U.S. President Barack Obama commuted her sentence, and she was released from prison on May 17, 2017.

Chelsea Manning is currently back in jail for a resisting a grand jury in Alexandria, VA. The statement we are reprinting was relayed by her supporters on June 30, 2019, during the NYC Queer Liberation March, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising.

Friends,

I'm deeply saddened that I can not be here with you today.

A few months ago, while speaking on the phone from jail with one of my friends out in Brooklyn, I came to a startling realization. I said: "I remember growing up as a kid searching for someone to look up to — someone to lean on for inspiration. I needed a role model."

Right then I realized, the thing I needed as a young kid is now available. I said, "Wow, look at all these kids and teens and young adults in the queer community — they found each other."

I felt something so profound that I broke down crying, and my friend did too. I finally felt that word that gets thrown around so much — I felt PRIDE. I almost yelled into the phone: "I'm so fucking proud of my community. I'm

proud of you. I'm proud of what we have, of what we've built together."

Despite everything, we as a community face daunting challenges every day. The world feels colder and more alien. Our society constantly reminds us — in both obvious and subtle ways — of the need for us to meet their standards. To meet their expectations. We somehow always need their approval.

Our spaces changed. Our neighborhoods gentrified. Our protests became parades. Our acts of defiance became exhibitions. Our love and rage were commodified — turned into something that could be packaged and branded and sold.

Christopher Street, Washington Square, Stonewall — on these streets, on this land which rightfully belongs to the Lenape people, the true history of queer and trans liberation is written. All these places tell stories: Stories of solidarity, of love, of rebellion. Our movement for freedom began here, and the fact that you are all standing here today proves it is far from over.

The first pride was a riot. But we will not allow that historic struggle to simply become a catchphrase on designer T-shirts. We are here today because we know that no matter how much they claim otherwise, the forces of capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy have always — and will always — work against queer and trans justice. We are here because we know that rainbow-branded storefronts are not signs of acceptance, but of oppression with better marketing. We are here because we know there should be no pride for some of us without liberation for all of us.

We are here for trans women of color, who, despite leading the fight at Stonewall 50 years ago, continue to be attacked and killed on our streets, in jails and prisons, and in our own communities. We are here for Layleen Polanco, who just a few weeks ago was found dead in solitary confinement on Rikers Island. We are here for Johana Medina León, a 25-year-old asylum seeker from El Salvador, who died in ICE custody on the first day of Pride Month. We are here for Ashanti Carmon, Zoe Spears, Muhlayisa Booker, and the 8 other trans women who have been murdered this year alone.

We are here for our queer and trans siblings, and all the children who have been separated from their families and placed in concentration



camp at the southern border. We are here for sex workers, and to demand the full decriminalization of sex work. We are here for indigenous people, on whose land we now march. We are here because a society that relies on prisons, police, borders, and military intervention is fundamentally at odds with queer and trans lives.

We stand here today because we refuse to accept these injustices. Because we believe in a better world — a world that we create every single day. Every action we take brings this world into reality. We see it when we stand in solidarity for our incarcerated queer siblings. We feel it when we reclaim our spaces and march in streets. We experience it when we build systems of mutual aid that allow our communities to thrive without the intervention of the state.

Today, I hope you will look around you and see this world. It is not a utopia in the far-away future — It is here. It is our community. It is us. We Got This.

Your Friend in Struggle,

Chelsea Elizabeth Manning

Follow Chelsea on Twitter: @xychelsea



Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson and others leading a protest at City Hall for 475 — a comprehensive LGBT rights bill — which followed the Stonewall uprising in 1971 & 1972.



One of the signs at the NYC Queer Liberation March, June 30, 2019



Cuba Solidarity in Vancouver, Stronger Than Ever!

By Janine Solanki

In today's world of imperialist wars, climate crisis and increasing attacks on poor and working people, Cuba stands out as a beacon for those fighting for a better world. While the U.S. and their imperialist allies export war and weapons, Cuba is exporting health, with doctors providing medical assistance to under-served communities and disaster zones around the world. While austerity measures and cuts to social services are being made in so-called first world countries, Cuba has continued to provide free healthcare and education without fail to their people, despite the pressure of the ongoing U.S. blockade.

The Cuban Revolution, which has inspired struggles against injustice worldwide, began with a group of young Cuban revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro. On July 26, 1953 this group attacked the Moncada Army Barracks in Santiago de Cuba, an initial strike against the U.S.-backed Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. The July 26th Movement, named after this heroic effort, persisted and later led the Cuban Revolution to victory in January 1959!

Every year July 26 or "Moncada day" is celebrated in Cuba and around the world by supporters of the Cuban Revolution. On July 27 this year, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) held a community BBQ to celebrate Cuba's

Moncada Day and the gains of the Cuban socialist revolution.

A sunny afternoon at Vancouver's Trout Lake Park was the perfect setting for the VCSC Moncada Day, with Cuban flags, banners and the smell of delicious food on the BBQ to welcome over 85 people who joined to support and celebrate Cuba. Alongside the cultural program, kids were excited to take part in the piñata, and adults had their own prizes to win in the raffle draw!

VCSC organizers Azza Robji and Janine Solanki opened the event with brief history of July 26th, and the significance of the ongoing Cuban Revolution in today's world. Cuba's example and support has also been a vital part of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution. VCSC coordinator Tamara Hansen and organizer Alison Bodine happened to be in Venezuela participating in the Foro de Sao Paulo solidarity conference and sent a message of greetings from Venezuela which was played at the event! You can read their report from Venezuela on page 8 of this issue of Fire This

Time.

The program continued with poets Alejandro Mujica-Olea and Macarena Cataldo Hernandez, representing the group Proyecto Cultural Sur Vancouver. Mayra Climaco, a Nicaraguan poet, activist and former Sandinista fighter also shared her moving poetry.

Azza Robji took a moment to introduce an important petition campaign demanding that Canada reopen its visa services and IRCC offices in Havana, Cuba. The government of Canada's unprecedented move closes the doors to Cuban family members, students, academics, artists and athletes traveling to Canada. Attendees were encouraged to sign on to the petition, an initiative of the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) which VCSC is a member of. Everyone was then treated to the

music of Maju Maju, a South African born singer and performer, now living in Vancouver.

While the event brings a bit of Cuba to Vancouver, Janine then spoke about experiencing Cuba firsthand, on the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade in May 2020, or the Calixto Garcia Brigade in December 2019. Janine, as the CNC's national coordinator for the Che Guevara Brigade, encouraged attendees to consider joining this unique opportunity to visit Cuba.

As twilight set in, it was time to warm up the evening with salsa dancing! An enthusiastic crowd joined a salsa lesson led by Janine. After learning a few new steps, the event came to a



Tabeling at Pride Premiere at the Vancouver Art Gallery



Celebrating Cuba's Moncada Day at Trout Lake Park

close with dancing to the beat of Cuban salsa under the canopy of trees!

Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba has not missed any opportunity to be out in the summer sun this July! On July 7 VCSC had a busy table at the Commercial Drive Car Free Festival, which attracts hundreds of thousands of festivalgoers each year. VCSC, joined the full day Pride Premiere event in downtown Vancouver, with an info table highlighting the achievements of the LGBTQ+ community in Cuba.

VCSC also sponsored and participated in the 6th annual "Sopa Sur" event organized by Proyecto Cultural Sur Vancouver, on July 28 at the Sopa Sur Latin American monument

in Vancouver's Seafarth Peace Park. This beautiful cultural event featured the poetry of many community members, and was led by Lucy Ortiz, director of Proyecto Cultural Sur Vancouver. The event was also a special recognition to Oscar Villalobos, a co-founder of the organization, poet and active community member and activist.

Find out about the next VCSC event at www.vancubasolidarity.com, or follow on Facebook and Twitter @VanCuba_VCSC



VCSC salsa lesson at Pride Picnic in the Park



Talking about Cuba at Car Free Day Commercial Drive



By Juan Diego Nusa Peñalver

History cannot be forgotten. At a time when U.S. imperialism and its regional allies are intent upon eliminating the idea that "a better world is possible," the Cuban Revolution and its heroic people are resisting at all costs, convinced of the justness of their ideals, and celebrating the 66th anniversary of the assaults on the Moncada in Santiago de Cuba, and the Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Garrison in Bayamo.

These glorious events changed forever the direction of an entire country, their greatness recognized beyond the nation's borders, opening a new stage in the history of Our America.

The justness of their revolutionary ideas led the generation of Martí's centenary, led by Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz, to risk their lives to plant the seed of this historic change, which despite the failure of the military action would bear fruit a few years later.

The daring attack on the cruel U.S. backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, allowed the population to gain consciousness of the need for armed struggle to transform the nation's dire circumstances, with which

Cubans retook the road to full independence, that given its projections and significance, became an example for Caribbean and Latin American countries, also battling to win their "second and definitive" independence, as José Martí said.

The armed action was based on a progressive



Free universal healthcare is a monumental achievement of the Cuban Revolution

program, in which the most important aspirations for socio-economic and political transformation at that time were outlined masterfully by Fidel in his historic self-defense during the spurious trial that followed

the frustrated assault, October 16, 1953, when the Comandante en Jefe ended with the celebrated phrase: "Condemn me, it doesn't matter, history will absolve me."

The group's action and program reflected a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the prevailing objective and subjective conditions in Cuba, which had matured extraordinarily following Batista's pro-imperialist

coup, on March 10, 1952, in order to prevent a majority party, of a reformist orientation, from coming to power through an electoral process, convened within the framework of "representative democracy,

"which the bourgeois regime itself, dependent on the United States, did not respect. The tactical setback suffered on July 26, 1953, when the military objectives foreseen in the action were not achieved, did not modify the historical results of the events, which were definitively inserted into the annals of Cuba's revolutionary history.

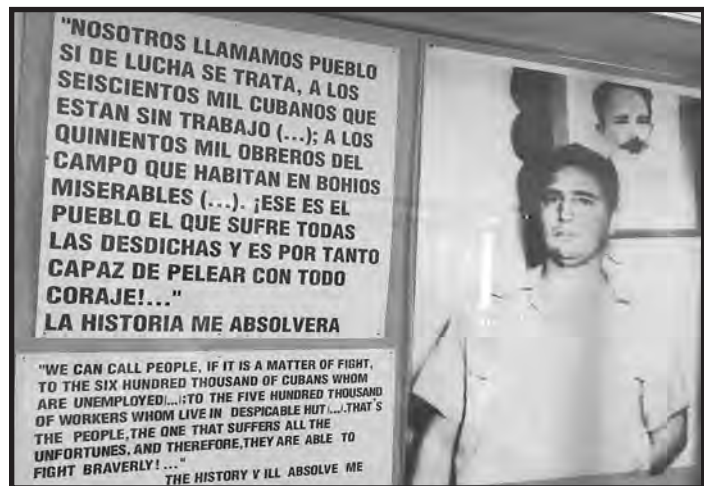
A new stage of armed struggle was opened with the assault on the Moncada garrison in Santiago de Cuba, a city with a long tradition in the country's previous independence wars, and the simultaneous attack on the Batista army's garrison in the city of Bayamo - a stage that would continue until the dictatorship was overthrown January 1, 1959.

The deep convictions and ideals that motivated the glorious events were strengthened and extended. The Moncada became the antecedent and a valuable experience leading to decisive subsequent events: the Granma expedition, from the sister land of Mexico, and the guerrilla struggle in the mountains, which would be the principle form of revolutionary action, with the indispensable support of an underground movement across the entire country.

Fidel insisted that the Cuban people's struggle for liberation did not begin that day: "The heroic march begun in 1868 by Céspedes was reinitiated, and later continued by that exceptional man whose centenary was commemorated the same year (1953), the intellectual author of the Moncada: José Martí.

"Sixty-six years after the Moncada, seen by many, inside Cuba and beyond, as an impossible "assault on heaven," the national celebration invites Cubans to reflection on the past, present and, above all, the future of the revolutionary struggle on the road to building a prosperous and sustainable socialist country, in which the greatest possible share of social justice is achieved.

From: granma.cu



Display from Fidel's famous 1953 "History Will Absolve Me" speech where he defended himself against the charges brought against him after he led the attack on the Moncada Barracks

OUR HERITAGE



**Haydée Santamaría
1922-1980**

Haydée Santamaría is a fundamental leader of the Cuban Revolution. She and Melba Hernández were the two women who participated in the assault on the Moncada Army Barracks on July 26, 1953. Led by Fidel Castro, the assault was a military failure, but it is credited as the spark that lit the flame of the Cuban Revolution.

Haydée survived prison and was a founder of the 26th of July Movement, which led the Cuban Revolution to victory in 1959. She founded and directed, "La Casa de las Américas", which became the most important cultural institution in Latin America. Haydée was also an original member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

"The transformation after Moncada was total. One continues to be the same person, we could all continue being the same people that were full of passion, and we could, one can continue to be passionate. But the transformation was great, it was so much that if we had not made a series of ideas and critical approaches, it would have been difficult to continue living or at least to remain normal. It became clear to us that the problem was not to change a human being, the problem was to change the system, but also that if we had not set out to change human beings, perhaps the system would not have been changed. [...] Then we had moments when we did not know what had happened to Fidel, and we really wanted to disappear. We were there with such assurance that if Fidel lived, Moncada lived, that if Fidel lived, there would be many Moncadas."

- From the book, "Haydée habla del Moncada" [Haydée Speaks About Moncada] Casa de las Américas, 1985



**CANADA MUST FULLY REOPEN THE IRCC OFFICE
& ALL VISA SERVICES TO CUBANS IN HAVANA, CUBA!**

#CDNVISAS4CUBA

#UNBLOCKCUBA #NOMÁSBLOQUEO

Press Release from the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC)

On July 17, 2019, people across Canada will take part in a day of action demanding that the government of Canada fully reopen the IRCC Office and all visa services offered to Cubans in Havana, Cuba. This campaign, initiated by the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), will include calls and emails to elected officials and will use the hashtags #CdnVisas4Cuba #UnblockCuba and #NoMasBloqueo on social media. The campaign also coincides with the launching of a new national petition with the same demand, directed towards Prime Minister Justin Trudeau; Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland; and Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Ahmed Hussen.



On May 8, 2019

the Government of Canada made the abrupt decision to shut down the section of its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) Office in Havana through which visas were processed for Cuban citizens wishing to visit Canada. This includes Cubans traveling for family visits, and those seeking work or

study permits. This decision has introduced unreasonable delays and significant financial obstacles, as well as personal and emotional distress for those Cubans seeking to travel to Canada, and will cause (and has caused), among other things, significant damage to family unification, business, cultural, scientific, and sports relations.

Each year over a million Canadians travel to Cuba. A Cuban grandmother, Odalys Riverón Martínez, now denied the ability to meet her baby grandson in Canada, was quoted by the CBC saying, "How is it possible that

Canada closes the doors to this country who receives them?"

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), represented across Canada by 20 member groups, promotes social, cultural, political, and economic

relations between Canada and Cuba. Canada and Cuba have a long history of uninterrupted diplomatic relations since 1945. The CNC views this recent government of Canada decision as a serious departure from these friendly relations, a relationship which benefits Cubans and Canadians alike.

CNC VISA CAMPAIGN UPDATE!

After weeks of social media campaigning, protests, and petitioning - on July 29, 2019 the government of Canada announced that they would reinstate "a number of visa and biometrics services that were originally offered at the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) visa office in Havana, Cuba." This is a positive step, however does not mean that the IRCC office has reopened, or that the full demands of the CNC visa campaign have been met. The government of Canada still does not have any IRCC staff in Cuba, Visa applications must be made online (not in person, as was standard prior to the recent hostile diplomatic measures taken by Canada) and any applicants that require medical exams or interviews still will have to travel to another third-party country. The campaign to reinstate all IRCC services in Havana, Cuba continues!

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Online Petition



Canada must fully reopen the IRCC Office & all visa services offered to Cubans in Havana, Cuba!

To: Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau; Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the Honourable Ahmed D. Hussen; and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland,

On May 8, 2019 the Government of Canada made the abrupt decision to shut down the section of its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) Office in Havana through which visas were processed for Cuban citizens wishing to visit Canada, including family visits, and those seeking work or study permits;

Given that this decision followed the 50 per cent reduction in January of this year of the staff of Canada's embassy in Cuba;

Given that Cuban citizens will now have to travel to a third country (eg. Mexico, Barbados or Dominican Republic) in order to submit their applications to the government of Canada with no guarantee of approval;

Given that the reduction of Embassy staff and the closing of the IRCC Office have introduced unreasonable delays and significant financial obstacles, as well as personal and emotional distress, for those Cubans seeking to travel to Canada, and will cause (and has caused), amongst other things, significant damage to family unification, business, cultural, scientific and sporting relations;

Noting that Canada and Cuba have enjoyed uninterrupted diplomatic relations since 1945, and that the reduction of Embassy staff and the closure of the IRCC Office are developments that represent a serious departure from these friendly relations;

Be it resolved that we the undersigned call on the government of Canada to fully reopen the IRCC Office and all visa services offered to Cubans in Havana, Cuba, so that visa processing may proceed in a reasonable manner.

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE



www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca

Please mail all completed petitions to:
Canadian Network on Cuba
56 Riverwood Terrace, Bolton ON, L7E 1S4

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TRUMP LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!

Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade Vancouver takes part in Coast-to-Coast Day of Action!

By Janine Solanki

The U.S. blockade on Cuba is severe, inhumane and cruel. Between 1961 and 2018, the United States economic blockade on Cuba caused damages calculated at over \$134 billion. Recently U.S. President Trump has taken unprecedented steps to tighten the U.S. blockade on Cuba, such as implementing Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the act which codifies the U.S. blockade into law. Title III has never been enacted until now, opening the door for U.S. lawsuits against Cuban and foreign businesses operating in Cuba. In addition, Trump has sanctioned more than 100 Cuban companies and imposed stricter travel restrictions on U.S. citizens, which is expected to cut the number of people from the U.S. who visit Cuba in half.

After nearly 60 years of the U.S. blockade, Cuba has continued to exercise their right to self-determination, and develop a society that puts the interests of the Cuban people first. For example, although the U.S. blockade makes importing medicine and medical supplies difficult, expensive or downright impossible, Cuba still provides its people with world-renowned free and accessible healthcare!

The government of Canada is also taking its own hostile and unprecedented actions against Cuba. On May 8 Canada made the abrupt

decision to shut down the visa services section of its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) Office in Havana, preventing Cuban citizens from being able to visit Canada. This has divided families and caused massive delays, uncertainty, and significant financial obstacles for Cubans wishing to visit Canada for business, cultural, scientific and sporting relations.

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) has initiated a campaign demanding Canada fully reopen the IRCC office and visa services in Havana, Cuba, and called for a Coast-to-Coast Day of Action on July 17. Here in Vancouver, the Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver (FCAB-Van), members of the CNC, organized their monthly action against the U.S. blockade on this day.

Cuba supporters and activists gathered in front of the U.S. consulate in downtown Vancouver and raised their picket signs demanding "Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "U.S. Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" Between rounds of picketing and chanting, protesters heard from speakers including a voice message of solidarity from activists with

Ottawa Cuba Connections. Vancouver is joined by Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine every month for these united actions. This month, as part of the day of action, many other cities joined in with a social media campaign! Using the hashtags #CdnVisasforCuba #UnBlockCuba and #NoMasBloqueo the internet was lit up with solidarity with Cuba. This included a video from the Vancouver action, with protesters chanting their demands with banners and picket signs under the U.S. Consulate sign!

Find out about the next Vancouver action against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, at www.vancouverblockade.org or on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan



conducted by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their coalition on behalf of the U.S. and other imperialist countries including England and France. While Saudi-led coalition fighter jets are directly responsible for the bloodshed, killing and destruction against Yemen, the United States and their European allies have been providing logistics, training, weapons, military and material support from day one of the war. Saudi Arabia might be committing the crime, but imperialism is providing them with the weapons, the bullets, the targets, the motives and the cover and protection to do so.

The Intercept, a U.S. based online news publication, reported in an investigative article published on April 14, 2019 that "a highly classified document produced by the French Directorate of Military Intelligence shows that Saudi Arabia and the UAE are overwhelmingly dependent on Western-produced weapon systems to wage their devastating war in Yemen... The Saudi-led bombing campaign in North Yemen primarily relies on three types of aircraft: American F-15s, British EF-2000 Typhoons, and European Tornado fighters... And the coalition blockade...relies on U.S., French, and German models of attack ships".

End the Blockade of Yemen! All Foreign Troops Out of Yemen Now!

In addition to causing death and destruction against the Yemeni people, the Saudi-led coalition has been imposing a cruel air, land and sea blockade of Yemen, stopping commercial goods and humanitarian aid from reaching the most needed.

In a recent press release by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) on the consequences of the blockade and the airport closure in Yemen, Mohammed Abdi, NRC's director in Yemen said, "As if bullets, bombs and cholera did not kill enough people, the airport closure is condemning thousands more to a premature death... There is no justification for preventing very sick civilians from leaving the country to get life-saving medical treatment." Here again, Saudi Arabia and their masters in Washington DC have shown a complete disregard for human life.

As long as imperialist domination, war and aggression continue against Yemen there will be no solution to the political or humanitarian crisis in the country for the people of Yemen. Any real solution needs to be local, without any foreign interference or war imposed on the people of Yemen. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their imperialist masters must respect the right to self-determination of the Yemeni people and not interfere in their internal affairs. Hence, the first steps for a truly viable and lasting peace will start with all foreign troops out of Yemen immediately.

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

Mobilization Against War & Occupation organizes against threats & war on Iran!



By Janine Solanki

In the last few months, the U.S. government has increased its threats and provocations against Iran. All the while, the mainstream media machine has been working overtime to deliver manipulations and misinformation in the news. To give just a few examples of the way media mainstream media is lying about Iran:

- In May 2018, U.S. President Trump took the U.S. out of the international deal with Iran and started imposing sanctions on Iran. However, now that Iran is increasing uranium enrichment, headlines are claiming Iran is "breaking the deal" - a deal that is defunct since the U.S. already illegally broke it and renewed its harsh sanctions on Iran!

- The U.S. flies spy drones over Iranian airspace, a violation of Iranian sovereignty and security. On June 20 Iran shot down a U.S. drone which was violating Iranian airspace. The U.S. government pointed the finger of blame at Iran, despite Iran's right to defend its airspace, and even came close to launching airstrikes on Iran.

- While there was a flurry of headlines when Iranian boats intercepted a British tanker on July 11 and on July 19 seized a British tanker, the media barely blinked and ignores the fact that on July 4, Britain seized and is still holding an Iranian oil tanker near Gibraltar.

It is clear that now more than ever, antiwar groups and peace-loving people must take a stand against U.S. threats, provocations and sanctions against Iran. Last month the U.S.-based United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) called for International Days of Action against war on Iran. Here in Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) endorsed the call.

On June 12, MAWO organized a rally and petition drive demanding "No War on Iran!" in downtown Vancouver. The action attracted the attention of people who stopped at the information table to talk to organizers and to pick up antiwar literature. MAWO's chairperson Alison Bodine took to the microphone and spoke to protesters and passersby about the dangerous U.S. threats and actions against Iran. With banners and picket signs reading "Don't Attack Iran!" anyone walking by could see that there is more to the story than the news is telling them, and that

there is an antiwar group they can get involved with!

The next day on June 13, MAWO organized a public forum at the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch. The forum started with Alison Bodine, MAWO chairperson, who was the MC of the evening and outlined the importance of protesting the U.S. actions against Iran. The forum included a series of video clips, detailing the history of Iran/U.S. relations and the recent threats and attacks by the U.S. against Iran. The speaker of the evening was Ali Yerevani, who is an Iranian social justice activist, editor of the Fire This Time Newspaper and was a participant in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Ali took the U.S./Iran conflict to its roots, and framed his talk saying "The best and only way to understand this conflict between the U.S. and Europe with Iran, is to understand that the foundation of the conflict is between the sovereignty and self-determination of the Iranian people, against the domination and bullying of imperialist countries..." and how the U.S. government "wants to take away that independence and sovereignty, for further economic and political advantages and domination in the Middle East." Ali's talk backed up this premise with the long history of foreign imperialist and colonial domination in Iran, from the British empire, to the U.S./UK-backed coup against Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in 1953, and the propping up of the monarchy in Iran which was overthrown in the 1979 Iranian revolution - bringing us to today and the drive of U.S. imperialism to dominate Iran, a country with huge influence in the region, in order to gain hegemony in the entire Middle East.

On July 7, MAWO had a table at the Commercial Drive Car Free Festival in East Vancouver. This popular annual festival brings out hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom stopped at the MAWO table to get more information, to sign petitions and to talk to organizers.

To find out about the next MAWO event and how to get involved, visit www.mawovancouver.org or follow on Facebook and Twitter @MAWO_van



Left: MAWO protest against war on Iran, July 12, 2019. Right: Ali Yerevani speaks at the MAWO forum against war on Iran, July 13, 2019.

OUR RIGHTS ARE UNDER ATTACK! WHAT DO WE DO? STAND UP FIGHT BACK! Trudeau hear us loud and clear: REPEAL BILL C-51 AND BILL C-59 NOW!

By Janine Solanki

Four years after Bill C-51 was passed and 218 protest actions later, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 is still not letting the government of Canada get away with imposing these anti-democratic laws.

Bill C-51 gave CSIS undefined powers of "disruption" and allows the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to be violated. Under a vague and fear-mongering definition of "terrorism" this legislation can be used for: mass surveillance; to target activists and journalists; and to suppress our freedom of speech and assembly.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's promises to "fix" Bill C-51 have now amounted to more legislation designed to further threaten our privacy and security. On June 21, 2019 the Liberal government's Bill C-59 received Royal Assent and officially became law in Canada. Bill C-59 gives new mass surveillance powers to Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE), with new hacking powers and a near-limitless open door to collect data on people in Canada.

With the passing of Bill C-59 it is more important than ever for protests against Bill

C-51 and Bill C-59 to continue. On July 8 the 217 action took place at Commercial-Broadway Skytrain Station, and on July 22 the 218 action was out at New Westminster Skytrain Station. As at every one of these actions, people signed on to the petition against Bill C-51 and Bill C-59, outraged that these laws are infringing on their rights and freedoms, and felt encouraged to see that this fight is continuing! During the combined actions activists distributed more than 700 educational brochures against



218th Action at New Westminster Skytrain Station, July 22, 2019

these extremely undemocratic and anti working class laws.

Find out about the next action at www.facebook.com/RepealBillC51 or on Twitter @StopBillC51

REPEAL BILL C-51 & BILL C-59!
OUR SECURITY LIES IN
DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF ALL!

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U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA! END SANCTIONS AGAINST VENEZUELA!

#TrumpUnblockVenezuela #TrumpDesBloqueaVenezuela
DROP ALL CHARGES AGAINST THE EMBASSY PROTECTION COLLECTIVE!



Friday August 9 2019

1. PROTEST ACTION 4PM

> U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!
US CONSULATE IN VANCOUVER - 1070 WEST PENDER ST.

2. INFO TABLING & PETITION 5:30PM

> NO MORE U.S./CANADA SANCTIONS & THREATS!
> RESPECT THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY - ROBSON ST. and HOWE ST.

Fire This Time - Venezuela Solidarity Campaign

WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET



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